The Fall of Great Moravia

Who Was Buried in Grave H153 at Pohansko near Břeclav?

Edited by
Jiří Macháček and Martin Wihoda

BRILL

EAST CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE AGES, 450-1450

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East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450

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VOLUME 54

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The publication of this book was supported by Faculty of Arts of Masaryk University Brno (Internationalization of Publications – Development Programme of Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic) and Czech Science Agency Grant No. GAP405/12/0111.

Cover illustration: Fig. 2.10. Pohansko near Břeclav – north-east suburb. Church No. 2. Grave H153. Slanted photograph (photo: ÚAM FF MU archive).

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Macháček, Jiří, 1971- editor. | Wihoda, Martin, 1967- editor.
Title: The fall of Great Moravia : who was buried in grave H153 at Pohansko near Breclav? / edited by Jiří Macháček, Martin Wihoda.
Other titles: Who was buried in grave H153 at Pohansko near Breclav?
Description: Leiden ; Boston : Brill, [2019] | Series: East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450, ISSN 1872-8103 ; volume 54 | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2018055732 (print) | LCCN 2018056913 (ebook) | ISBN 9789004392878 (ebook) | ISBN 9789004383135 (hardback : alk. paper)
Subjects: LCSH: Pohansko Site (Czech Republic)—Antiquities. | Human remains (Archaeology)—Czech Republic—Pohansko Site.
Classification: LCC DB879.P62 (ebook) | LCC DB879.P62 F35 2019 (print) | DDC 943.71/021—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2018055732

Typeface for the Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic scripts: "Brill". See and download: brill.com/brill-typeface.

ISSN 1872-8103
ISBN 978-90-04-38313-5 (hardback)
ISBN 978-90-04-39287-8 (e-book)

This book is printed on acid-free paper and produced in a sustainable manner.

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Preface

It has been some time since the modern science of medieval studies acknowledged that historical sources cannot be restricted merely to written evidence, such as documents and letters, legends and chronicles, and came to realise that it is necessary to take into consideration the evidence of material sources; that the study of the Early Middle Ages cannot manage without collaboration with the archaeologists and/or anthropologists whose research plays an increasingly important and occasionally even decisive role in our knowledge of history. Many of these sources – fragments of pottery and animal or human remains – are pieces from finds made en masse. Immovable heritage is frequently comprised of standard remains of farms and houses. Archaeological materials provide insight into different aspects of everyday life. However, they are silent, static and unfortunately anonymous. In the imagined picture of history, which today is the outcome of multi-disciplinary collaboration, they mainly provide a foundation for the reconstruction of the social and natural environment in which historical events took place and where the agents of the related stories lived.

From time to time archaeologists succeed in making a discovery that may add detail to the "great history" and introduce new characters onto the historical stage. Such a find can captivate both the experts and the general public and provoke broad-based discussion, as did the discovery of an early medieval rotunda in the North-East Suburb of the Great Moravian stronghold at Pohansko near Břeclav, which was excavated between 2007 and 2012. The results of the excavation of the rotunda and the adjacent cemetery have already been published in detail in several partial studies and monographs. The *East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450* series now makes it possible for the broad international scientific community to become acquainted with the up-to-date results of the research.

The importance of the discovery goes far beyond a mere find of an unknown church, the newest addition to the group of earliest Christian sanctuaries in the Czech lands, but rather consists in the uncovering of several graves in its interior. Of particular importance was the excavation of a grave located in a prestigious position along the main axis of the church. Interred in a grave constructed from stone were the remains of an older man, relatively tall for his era. The prominent position of the grave indicates that the remains were that of a man whose way of life was exceptional compared to a standard sample of the population. The evidence suggests that the man was likely a prominent figure

in society, potentially even the founder of the church. On the pages of the present collection this discovery is thoroughly described and even more importantly set into a wider historical context. It was a rather tumultuous period around the turn of the 9th and the 10th century when Great Moravia collapsed. The new orders that arose from the ruins of Great Moravia would play a crucial role in forming the shape of East Central Europe today. In this publication the curious reader will find contributions by leading experts who, inspired by the discovery of the rotunda at Pohansko, explore and deliberate on the events and the social processes that resulted in the rise and fall of Great Moravia.

In the introductory chapter *The Great Moravian Rotunda at Pohansko and an osteobiographical profile of its Founder* Jiří Macháček and Vladimír Sládek relate the rather unusual history of the discovery and exhaustively characterise the context of the find. Along the way they explain which methods are used by modern archaeology and the kind of data those methods yield. This is the background against which the search for the identity of the man buried in the rotunda must be understood, particularly the answers to questions regarding his social position. Based on the bodily remains the authors reconstruct the life of the man whose name is unknown, but who was clearly an extraordinary person in all respects. Modern anthropology, palaeopathology, taphonomy and chemistry provide surprisingly detailed information not just about his appearance, age and physical activity, but also about his illnesses, wounds and diet. The authors also ruminate on the possible causes of the death of the man from the rotunda and the meaning in his burial.

In the 9th century Mojmirid Moravia became a loose constituent of the Carolingian world, which in East Central Europe was represented by the Bavarian Eastern March, extending within the territory of today's Austrian Danube valley. Thanks to its position "on the edge" Pohansko was a natural link between the Bavarians from the Eastern March and the Moravians. The man buried in the rotunda was most likely an active agent in the events taking place in the area south and south-west of Pohansko. Description and complex analysis of the Bavarian Eastern March is provided in the chapter *The Austrian Danube Region around the Year 900* by the renowned Austrian medievalist Roman Zehetmayer. His account offers a deeper insight into the relationships between the lords of the Moravian strongholds and the imperial counts, bishops and Carolingian prefects. These relationships were not always hostile, as older historiography has argued, but were varied, covering anything from blood vendettas and merciless wars to firm alliances secured by blood relationships.

In the 10th century both Mojmirid Moravia and the Eastern March failed to withstand the interventions of the nomadic Magyars from the Carpathian

Basin. Their impact on the events around the year 900 is assessed in his text by Pavel Kouřil. The self-explanatory title (*The Hungarians and their Contribution to the Collapse and Fall of Great Moravia – Allies, Neighbours and Enemies*) literally invites us to contemplate the circumstances which brought the Magyars to the central Danube Basin, and queries to what extent the presence of the nomads was destructive. It shows that part of the Moravian elites could be on good terms with the new lords and even engage in military co-operation with them.

But what happened to the Mojmirids at the beginning of the 10th century? Who were the people who may have sworn an oath of loyalty to the Frankish Empire, but at the same time were feared adversaries and at other times close allies of the Carolingian rulers? These and other issues are addressed in the contribution by Martin Wihoda, who simultaneously draws attention to the impression the fall of the ducal dynasty left in contemporary memory (*The Second Life of the Mojmirid Dukes*). His deliberations are based on the traditional books of the Salzburg archbishopric (previously rather unappreciated by Czech historians) which provide evidence of surprisingly extensive relationships between the Frankish-Bavarian nobility and the Mojmirids. At the end of his text he justifiably asks whether the rotunda at Pohansko could have belonged to the original family inheritance of the Mojmirid clan, whose members could have attempted to make a return still at the beginning of the 10th century.

The recently discovered rotunda at Pohansko is one of the earliest Christian sanctuaries in the Slavic territories which prompted the inclusion of a study by David Kalhous in this collection which aims to recount the forms and methods employed in the process of the Christianisation of a marginal section of Early Medieval Europe and the role played in this process by local elites (*Graves, Churches, Culture and Texts*). On a general level his assessment touches on the concept of "proprietary churches" and the complicated relationship of the magnates and nobility to the church and ecclesiastical structures. His work also questions the nature of material support for evangelising activities and the link between a church and the social representation of its builders.

Exemplary founders and owners of early medieval churches are discussed in Austrian archaeologist Stefan Eichert's contribution entitled *"Founder tombs" in early medieval Carantania – A Survey*. He concentrates on Carinthia in the eastern Alps, a territory that was in many aspects similar to that of Great Moravia. During the 9th century the original Slavic principality transformed itself into a Carolingian county. Local Slavic elites adopted a new political identity and with it a new religion. Currently, no direct evidence is available, nor has a founder grave (Stiftergrab) been discovered in situ from the Carinthian

territory. Still, there are several coherent cases that suggest that tombs of the social elite are situated in the interior of the church. Privileged graves of the elite are also found in the pre-Christian context, for example as secondary burials in prehistoric burial mounds.

With the collapse of Mojmirid Moravia at the turn of the 9th and the 10th century, the centre of power moved elsewhere. Ivo Štefan explores the rise of Přemyslid Bohemia in his contribution, *Great Moravia, the Beginnings of Přemyslid Bohemia and the Problem of Cultural Change*. Štefan is dedicated to discussing contacts between the Bohemian leaders and the Mojmirids as well as the imprint that they left on the Přemyslid duchy in the later periods. He juxtaposes the similarities and differences between the two regions and ponders the question of perpetual return; whether some specialised groups (craftsmen, priests and retinue members) could have moved from devastated Moravia to Bohemia in the 10th century. We cannot rule out that it might have been Bohemia that was the end destination of the descendants of the man buried in the rotunda at Pohansko and who inspired us to compile this collection.

The *Conclusion* of the book, written by Jiří Macháček, attempts to answer the question of who the extraordinary man was and why he found his last rest in the most prestigious location on the main axis inside the second church in Pohansko near Břeclav. According to the author, he was very likely an important administrator or governor in Pohansko, perhaps a member of the retinue of one of the Mojmirid dukes. Macháček suggests that the man attempt to found a dynasty with its own dominium in a symbolic centre situated on a small church. The fate of his family during the collapse of Great Moravia, and in the following periods, is not clearly stated but some alternative answers are at least suggested.

We hope that the reader will find the investigation into the fate of our protagonist enticing and that it will provide him or her with food for thought about how society operated at the threshold of the 10th century, as well as insight into how despite all the twists and turns of and power games in the heart of Europe, the modern world emerged.

The book has been published as one of the outcomes of Czech Grant Agency project No. P405/12/0111 (*Between Great and Přemyslid Moravia. The Archaeology of the Collapse and Revitalisation of Early Medieval Society*). At the same time the texts by the individual authors were supported from additional sources which are always listed as appropriate. We would like to thank the Brill publishing house and the editors, Mrs. Marcella Mulder, Mrs. Kim Fiona

Plas and Mrs. Elisa Perotti, for making this publication possible and for their support. We would also like to thank Professor Florin Curta, the spiritus agens behind the East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450 series, who is making the results of Central European historical research available to the international scientific community through his editorial activities. We would like to acknowledge Mr. Miloš Bartoň and Mrs. Barbara Juch for the translation of these difficult texts.

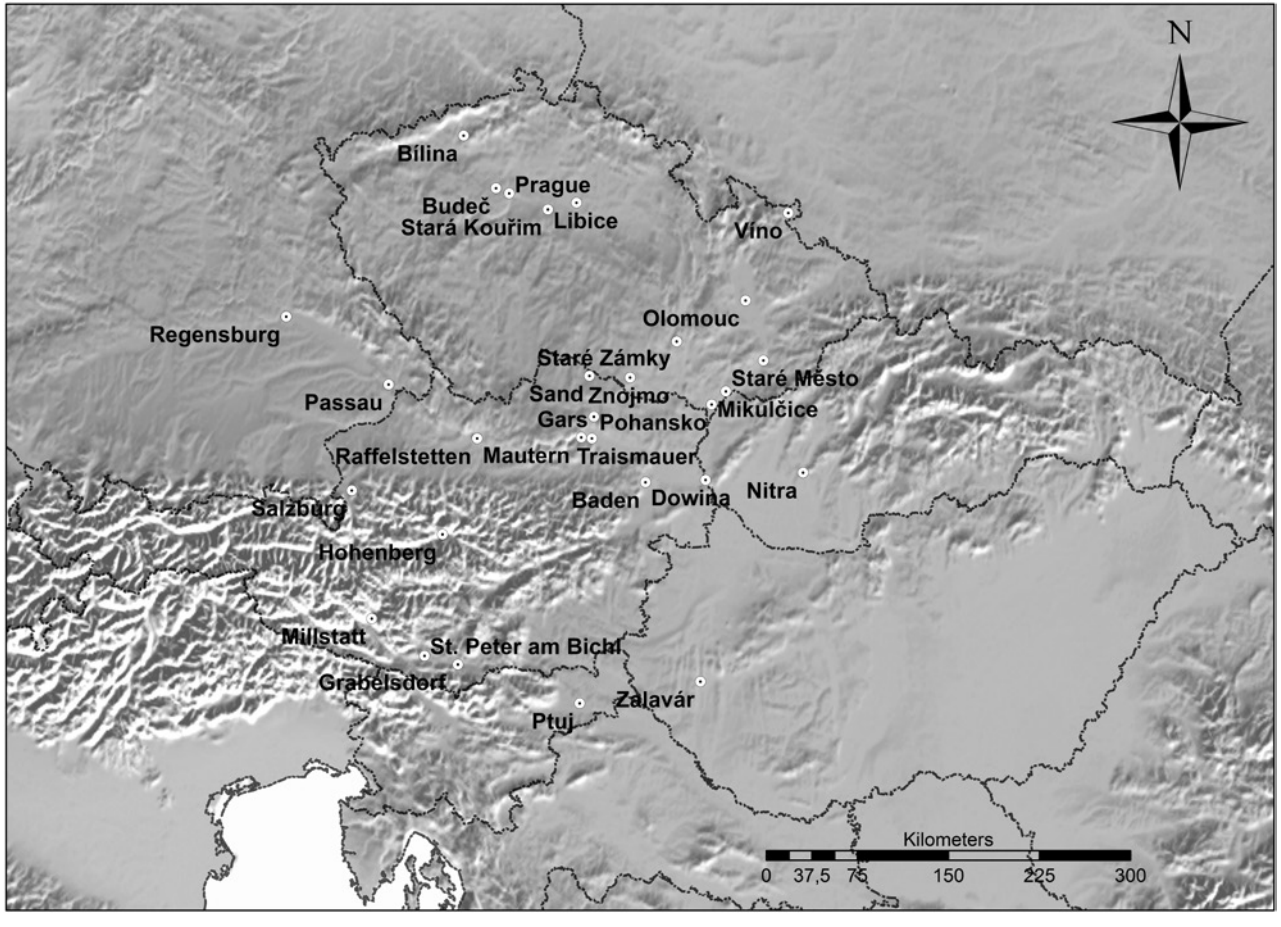

FIGURE 0.1 Map. East Central Europe. Location of the principal sites mentioned in the text.
AUTHOR J. MACHÁČEK

Illustrations

Abbreviations

AÖG	Archiv für österreichische Geschichte	
AR	Archeologické rozhledy	
ČČH	Český časopis historický	
ČMM	Časopis Matice moravské	
ČsČH	Československý časopis historický	
DA	Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelaters	
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica	
	DGK	Diplomata regum Germaniae ex stirpe Karolinorum
	EE	Epistolae
	LNG	Leges nationum Germanicarum
	SS	Scriptores
	SRG	Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum
	SRG NS	Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, Nova series
	SRM	Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum
MIÖG	Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung	
MMFH	Magnae Moraviae fontes historici	
PA	Památky archeologické	
PL	Migne, Patrologia Latina	
SHB	Studia Historica Brunensia	
SPFFBU	Sborník prací filosofické fakulty brněnské univerzity	
ZBLG	Zeitschrift für bayerische Landesgeschichte	

Notes on Contributors

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CHAPTER 1

The Great Moravian Rotunda at Pohansko and an Osteobiographical Profile of Its Founder

Jiří Macháček and Vladimír Sládek
Translated by *Miloš Bartoň*

The history of the discovery at the centre of this book begins in the autumn of 2006.[1] At that time the laboratory technician of the Institute of Archaeology and Museology of Masaryk University, Pavel Čáp, came up with the surprising claim that he had identified the place at Pohansko where the second Great Moravian church is situated – a church which generations of archaeologists had searched for in vain since the end of the 1950s when systematic excavation went full steam ahead in this area.

From the very start, the most zealous "church hunter" was Professor František Kalousek, the founder of the research station at Pohansko and for a long time head of the Department of Archaeology in Brno.[2] He was rather disheartened to hear that his honourable colleagues and contemporaries, Josef Poulík and Vilém Hrubý, had already uncovered a number of early medieval ecclesiastical buildings on "their" sites at Mikulčice and Staré Město-Uherské Hradiště, while he had to content himself with only one church regardless of how important the building was in terms of archaeology, and history.[3] In the 1950s and the 1960s archaeologists uncovered some of the earliest Christian sanctuaries of western Slavs and their adjoining cemeteries. The excavation of an abundance of golden and silver jewellery, swords, spurs and belts brought fame to archaeology both in former Czechoslovakia and far beyond its borders.[4] Although Kalousek's motivation was great, the results were not satisfactory. In addition to the main area of excavation, he opened

1 This study has been drawn up as part of research work under the GAČR GA18-15480S and GAP405/12/0111 grant projects. The chapter is based on two texts published in the book "Pád Velké Moravy aneb Kdo byl pohřben v hrobu 153 na Pohansku u Břeclavi?", by the Nakladatelství Lidové noviny publishers in 2016: "Jiří Macháček, Velkomoravská rotunda na Pohansku a její zakladatel" and "Vladimír Sládek, Portrét muže z hrobu 153: osteobiografický profil elity druhého kostela na Pohansku u Břeclavi".

2 Vignatiová 1972, 98, 102–103; Dostál 1971.

3 Kalousek 1961; Dostál, Kalousek, Macháček 2008.

4 Staňa 1967; Filip 1964.

 | DOI:10.1163/9789004392878_002

FIGURE 1.1 Pohansko near Břeclav – north-east suburb. Church No. 2. Area of excavation before starting work in 2006.
PHOTO: ÚAM FF MU ARCHIVE

up dozens of long trenches in various places, in the hope of finding stone debris that could signal the presence of medieval church remains. Bořivoj Dostál, Kalousek's successor, was also left without "his" second church. Ultimately, by the beginning of the new millennium, scholars came to accept the idea that in the Early Middle ages there was only one church at Pohansko and shifted research elsewhere.

Pavel Čáp made his discoveries in an area with an insignificant terrain elevation in the North-East Suburb at Pohansko (Fig. 1.1).[5] This spot, in spite of its interesting configuration, managed to escape the radar of the archaeologists. Rising above the present-day surface were the concrete foundations of a modern structure, the purpose of which was unknown. Archaeologists tended to ignore this particularly spot, even though they had passed by it every day, as for decades of archaeological work they went out of, or entered into the nearby building of the research station of the Masaryk University.

5 Dostál 1970; Dresler, Macháček, Přichystalová 2008.

The situation changed after Pavel Čáp examined the elevation using a geological drill. He tried drilling underground in several spots, but he hit an impenetrable layer formed of stone immediately below the turf. It took several attempts before he could find a gap through which he could push his drill deeper. So he extracted soil sediments and fragments of mortar found several decimetres below the present-day surface.

From the samples he obtained it was clear from the very beginning that they were not modern building material, let alone chips from the nearby concrete foundations. According to the results of a specialised analysis carried out by Antonín Zeman from the Institute of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics of the Czech Academy of Science, it was mortar "probably made of wind-blown sand and air-slaked lime. The material used in preparing the lime was very pure micritic limestone. This bonding material is characterised by clasts of slaked limestone with typical contractions in the central part and a system of small isolated fissures in the bonding material itself. An important component of the mortar consists of clasts of unslaked grey sprite limestone.... The two phenomena are encountered in Romanesque and Gothic mortars."[6] In laymen's terms, it was medieval mortar and its presence at that location could mean only one thing: somewhere nearby there must have been remains of a pre-modern stone and mortar building. Considering that the settlement at Pohansko vanished during the 10th century and, had not been restored before the modern age, it must have been a 9th-century building.

Čáp's discovery elicited an immediate response by the research team of the Institute of Archaeology and Museology of the Brno University (Jiří Macháček, Pavel Čáp, Petr Dresler and Renáta Přichystalová). It marked the start of long-term inter-disciplinary research which, apart from the archaeological team, involved several experts in various disciplines – anthropologists, historians, geophysicists, material engineers, surveyors, osteologists, geologists and chemists, parasitologists, palaeobotanists and many others. It was a find for which Central European archaeology had waited for over a quarter of a century – a new Great Moravian church with a vast cemetery and the grave of its founder; a find which aroused both interest on the part of the experts as well as the general public, and inspired many of the questions addressed in this book. It launched a new stage of archaeological investigation at Pohansko near Břeclav and a new round of debate on the beginnings of the early medieval nobility in East Central Europe.

6 Zeman 2007.

1.1 Archaeological Research and Excavation in the Great Moravian Rotunda at Pohansko

The first method applied by our team in collaboration with other experts in the examination of the elevation in the North-East Suburb of Pohansko was geophysical prospecting. This technique enables archaeologists to peek underground without the need to wield a shovel or spade. Measurement by pulse radar was carried out first, followed, after a prolonged period of time, by geoelectric resistivity measurements. Geophysical prospecting yielded positive results and both methods confirmed the existence of a subsurface feature which was not related to the visible concrete foundations of recent construction. Excavations in the area later confirmed the results of the geophysical survey. They also showed that geophysical measurements cannot identify the ground plan of a medieval building with any degree of precision. This is not surprising as the original walls were greatly damaged and only a small part was preserved *in situ* in its original place. However, many of the relics, most often blocks of collapsed walls and the stone structures of the graves, were successfully identified during the initial stages of research and influenced the planning of the next phase of excavation. The sophisticated technology confirmed our hunch about the existence of relics of a building at this location, which finally contributed to the strategic decision to launch systematic excavations which were to go on for a number of years at the places determined by a geophysical anomaly.[7]

Following the drilling carried out by Pavel Čáp and ground-penetrating radar measurements, we ran a trial trench across the elevation. In the trench we exposed the surface of a collapsed section of wall mixed with dark soil and fragments of mortar and plaster. On the outside edge of the uncovered section of the wall, in the sandy subsoil of the trench, we identified darker fills interpreted as graves. Occasional larger fragments of mortar appeared in the filling of the graves. The cultural layer in the trial trench yielded a fragment of a human skull and we also obtained early medieval pottery from the trench. The evidence suggested that they were relics of an early medieval stone and mortar structure with an adjacent cemetery. Excavations therefore started first as a research project of the Masaryk University, later as a project funded by the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic.[8]

7 Macháček et al. 2014, 91–94.
8 Macháček et al. 2014, 95–96.

FIGURE 1.2 Pohansko near Břeclav – north-east suburb. Church No. 2. Oblique shot of Great Moravian church debris and concrete foundations of recent building. PHOTO: ÚAM FF MU ARCHIVE

Excavation of the second church at Pohansko[9] was carried out between 2008 and 2012 and covered an area of 627 m². In the whole investigated area, the terrain was reduced exclusively by hand starting from the present-day surface, without deployment of heavy machinery. What we first encountered in the north-eastern suburb was stratigraphically the most recent building, the concrete remains of which were still standing. The origin and purpose of the concrete footing is unclear, though the most probable explanation is that the concrete foundations were laid in connection with building border fortifications after the German annexation of Austria in 1938.

Roughly 10–15 cm below the present-day surface we detected the surface of the debris layer formed by the collapsed early medieval building, made up of stones mixed with fragments of lime mortars and plasters (Fig. 1.2). During research campaigns in 2008 and 2009 we covered an area of 125 m² and gradually exposed the whole of the debris layer. The layer of debris was not completely compact and was interrupted by the foundations of the recent structure as well as disruption probably related to the pillaging of building stone in an later period. From other sites we are aware of Great Moravian buildings with stone

9 Macháček et al. 2014, 97–124; Čáp et al. 2011.

walls being dismantled in later periods. Mortars and plasters occurred within a maximum radius of 16 m from the ideal centre of the church. The debris were typically located on the site of the original building and in its immediate environs. In other words, trying to identify the original building on the basis of such remains calls to mind the proverbial needle in a haystack, as the ruins of the newly discovered structure take up a small fraction of the very large area of the Pohansko agglomeration.

After the complete removal of the debris layer the actual ground plan of the investigated structure emerged (Fig. 1.3). The stone foundations remained preserved *in situ* in only a few sections. The best preserved was the apse which was disrupted only by the foundations of the recent concrete structure. Regardless of the frequent interruptions, we were able to clearly determine the type of the building. This was possible because even in the absence of any masonry structure, the foundation trench was still in place, as a negative trace of the missing wall. It was a rotunda – a circular body with an apse on the NE side. The external diameter of the rotunda's apse was around 6 m, the inner diameter around 4.5 and 5 m. The external diameter of the hoof-shaped apse reached approximately 3.3 m and its inner diameter about 2.4 m. At the place where it joined the church's nave the apse narrowed down to 2.7 m (external dimension). The inner width of the entrance from the nave to the apse was ca 1.4 m. The main (longer) axis of the church passed through the nave and the apse from SW to NE and measured 8.5 m. Its deviation from the standard west-east direction is not surprising in the context of Pohansko. Identical orientation was also established in the first church discovered there as early as 1959.

Thanks to the sophisticated research methodology we received detailed information on the technology and procedures used in the construction of the rotunda. We attach primary importance to the fact that the basic supporting structure of the church was made of wood, though the external walls appeared to be built completely of stone. The principal supporting structure of the nave consisted of wooden columns. At the base of the foundation trench we discovered something resembling beds, or narrower grooves, into which horizontal beams could have been laid, possibly as longitudinal supports under the wall. If the horizontal and vertical elements had been tied together (e.g. by slanting braces) the result could have been a truss-like frame that could be filled up with the masonry. Analysis of the plaster indicated that the builders plastered and whitewashed the church nave on the outside and was intentionally scrubbed, probably with a broom, a rough brush, or a bunch of straw. The apse of the rotunda had a slightly different structure of the wall and different construction technology. Unlike the nave, it was found in a much better condition.

FIGURE 1.3 Pohansko near Břeclav – north-east suburb. Church No. 2. Floor plan of the above ground, foundation and collapsed walls of the rotunda with highlighted structural elements.
AUTHOR OF THE PLAN: P. DRESLER AND COLLECTIVE

The whole perimeter of the apse was originally made up of 14 smaller wooden columns. Thanks to the imprints in the mortar from the inner side of the apse wall, preserved *in situ*, we know that the space between the columns was filled by wattle. The combination of wooden columns and wattle formed the basic wooden structure, which was first daubed with mortar and then encased in a thin stone wall, probably made up of only a single layer of stones, and then plastered (Fig. 1.5).

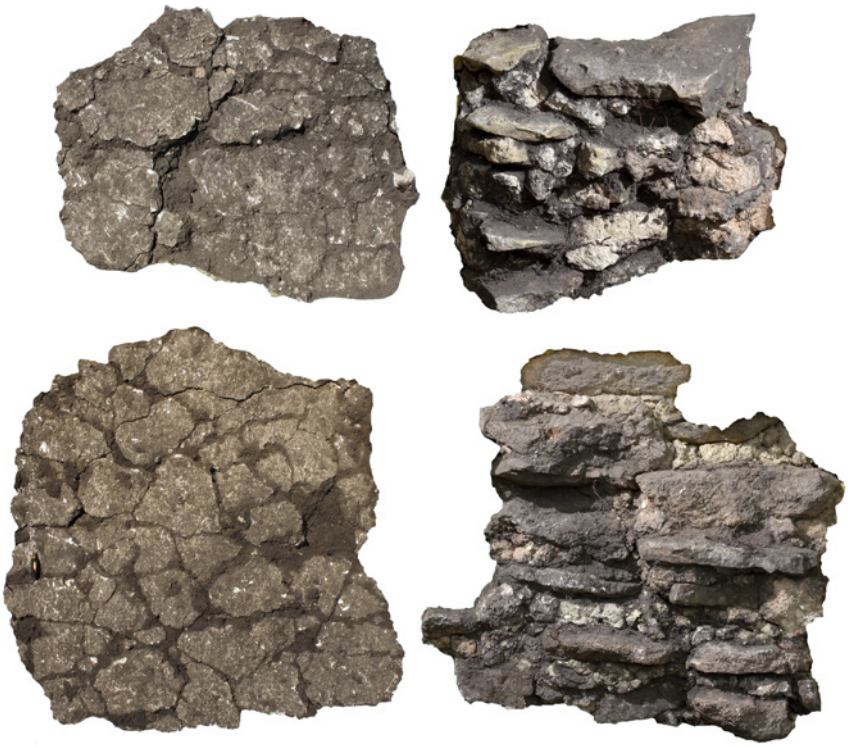


FIGURE 1.4 Pohansko near Břeclav – north-east suburb. Church No. 2. Two blocks of the collapsed walls of the apse recovered in situ, dimensions 30 × 43 cm and 48 × 46 cm.
PHOTO: J. ŠPAČEK

There was an extensive cemetery[10] situated around the rotunda where 152 graves were gradually uncovered in the course of five campaigns (Fig. 1.6). They were relatively well preserved thanks to the fact that Pohansko was not resettled after its collapse. The pits of the graves in the cemetery around the rotunda have been dug into the soil at various depths. The deepest was 123 cm, while part of the burials, mainly children, were laid immediately below the early medieval surface. If the graves were sunk deeper, their depth varied most frequently between 20 and 50 cm.

Artefacts were found in 65 graves, which represents 43% of the whole cemetery. But only finds from 50 graves (33%) can be clearly classified as grave goods of the deceased person. The most frequent finds include knives (36 items), which appeared in 28 graves. A total of 38 earrings (Fig. 1.7) cast

10 Macháček 2014, 267–272; Přichystalová 2011; Macháček et al 2016; Sládek – Macháček eds. 2017.

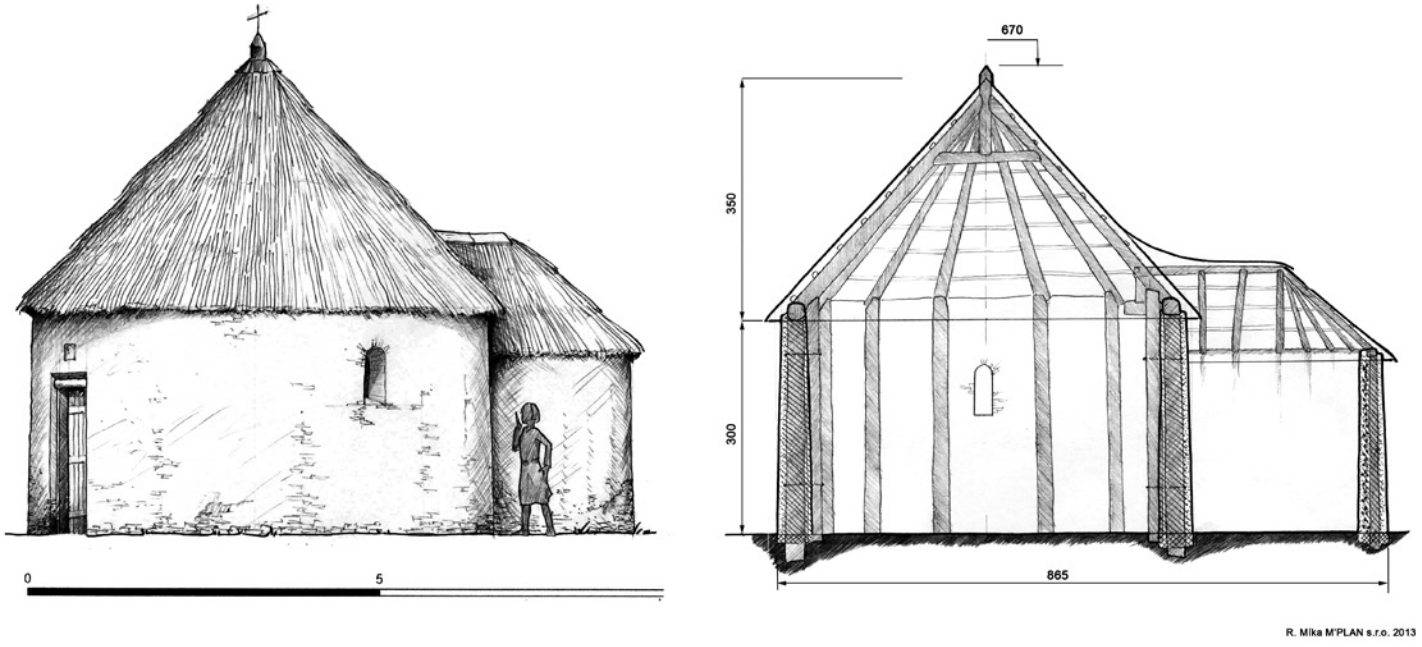


FIGURE 1.5 Pohansko near Břeclav – north-east suburb. Church No. 2. Reconstruction of the volumes and hypothetical cross-section of the building.
AUTHOR: R. MÍKA, M. PLAN

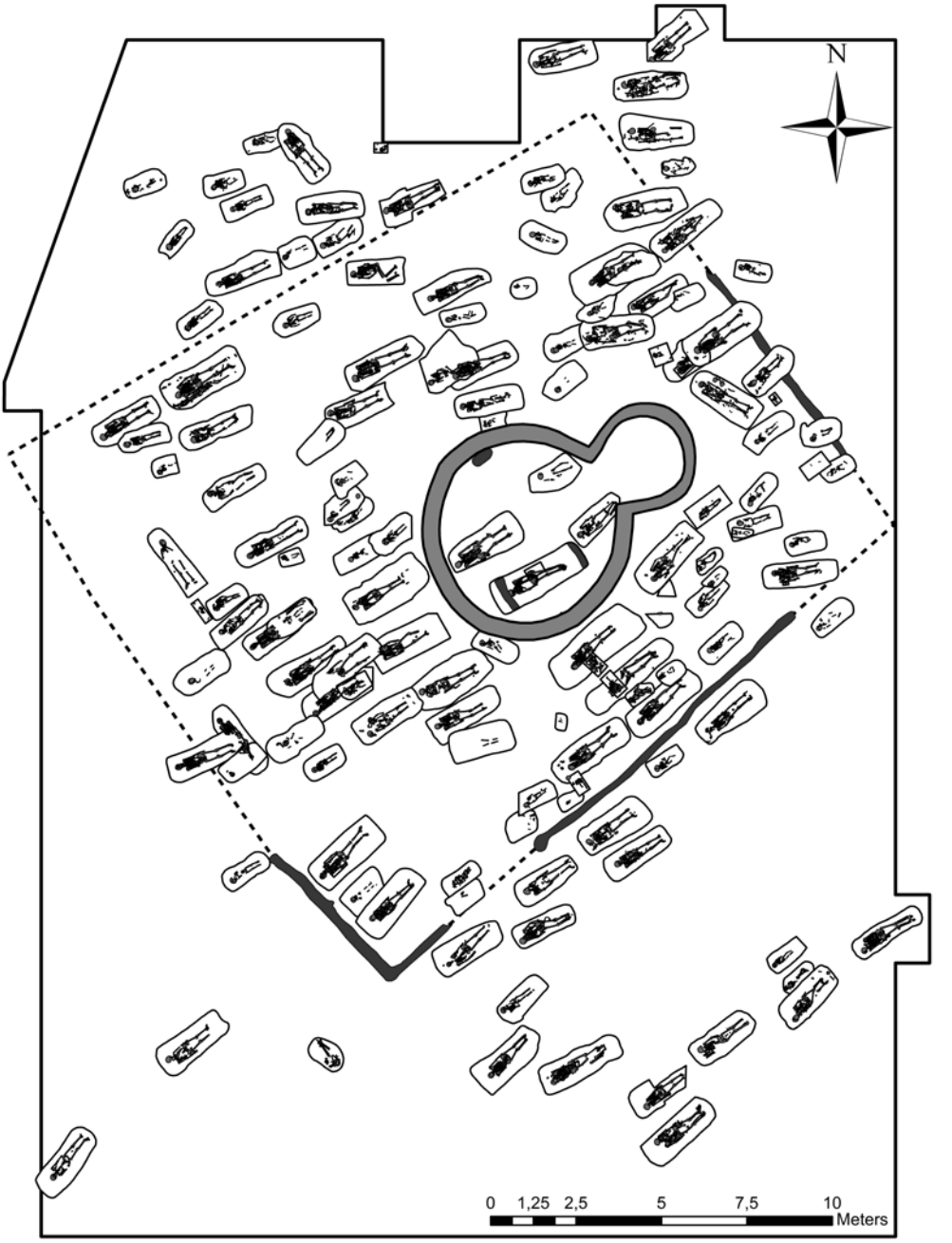


FIGURE 1.6 Pohansko near Břeclav – north-east suburb. Overall plan of the cemetery in the vicinity of Church No. 2.
AUTHOR OF THE PLAN: P. DRESLER – J. MACHÁČEK AND COLLECTIVE

FIGURE 1.7 Pohansko near Břeclav – north-east suburb. Grape-shaped and globular silver earrings from the graves in the church cemetery. Decorated by granulation. PHOTO: J. ŠPAČEK

in silver (18 items) and bronze (20 items) come from 16 graves, 16 beads from three graves, 10 buckles from five graves and 10 gombíks (or globular buttons; Fig. 1.8) from six graves (4 gombiks were made of glass, six gombiks were fashioned from non-ferrous metals). The finds further included eight strap ends from below-knee straps in six graves and four pairs of spurs. Five graves contained a vessel each. Rare finds consisted of a kaptorga (or amulet container), three jingle-bells, a ring and a lead cruciform pendant, which was related to the Christian belief of those buried there.

All of the graves respected the church building and none of them reached below its foundations. The majority of the graves are identically oriented with the longer axis passing through the centre of the apse and the hypothetical entrance to the nave at the opposite side. The beginning of burials taking place here must therefore have been tied in with the completion of the building. It is important to note that no grave cut through the debris of the rotunda, as in the case of Church no. 6 in Mikulčice, where six to nine graves have been stratigraphically interpreted as post-dating the destruction of the

FIGURE 1.8 Pohansko near Břeclav – north-east suburb. Heavily gilded chased gombiks from the graves in the church cemetery.
PHOTO: J. ŠPAČEK

building.[11] At Pohansko the stone debris always overlaid the graves. In several cases individual stones sagged into the fill of the grave pits (both in the church interior and outside it), which at the time of the church's collapse was not completely dense. The sinking of the stone debris into the graves could have also been caused by the rotting of the wooden coffins which caved in, filling the initially hollow inner space of the graves. All those observations support the conclusion that the cemetery was in existence at the same time as the church was in operation. Field observations indicate that there were no burials at the site before its construction nor after its destruction.

According to the preliminary assessment, burials around the rotunda were taking place from the late Great Moravian period (second half of the 9th century), represented by traditional Great Moravian jewellery in the form of bronze, highly gilded gombiks with palmettos on a punched background and silver earrings of standard types, or spurs, until the second half of the 10th century,

11 Poulík 1963, 35; Profantová 2003, 94.

a period which includes such finds as the Magyar war axe – fokos – or some types of jewellery – such as lead pendants or earrings with an eyehole and S-shaped temple rings. The results of the typological-chronological analysis are also supported by radiocarbon dating (C14) of bones from seven graves carried out in the laboratories in Poznań, Poland.[12] The obtained data falls within the period between 880 modAD and 969 modAD. This means that the people buried in the environs of the rotunda, represent a sample of the population who experienced both the flourishing of Great Moravia and its quick fall.

The most important discovery awaited us in the interior of the rotunda. After the removal of construction debris, at a depth of about 50 cm below its surface, outlines of darker fills of rectangular dug out pits became prominent. In the next phases of excavation it showed they were four inhumation burials (H140, H153, H166 and H176), later added to by the remains of a non-adult individual (H167). Two men from the category of adultus (20–35 years) and senilis (over 55 years) and three children aged 18 months to 12 years were laid under the floor of the existing building.[13]

The grave positions were dictated by the main longitudinal axis of the church passing through the apse and the centre of the nave. The graves were situated either directly on the longitudinal axis (H153) or in parallel with it. They were also oriented in accordance with the axis: the skeletons are laid in the SW-NE direction with the skull in SW and with the face of the deceased turned to the church apse. The graves of the two adult men (H153 and H166) are situated near the expected entrance to the church while the two non-adult individuals (H140 and H176) line the passage from the nave to the apse (Fig. 1.9). The child grave H167, of which only a skull fragment survived, was superimposed over grave H166, originally probably dug out in its fill, but its primary position is unclear.

The most important burial from among the whole group was obviously the remains of an older man from grave H153, situated in a prestigious location on the main axis of the church (for the interpretation of this position see below). The grave is exceptional in its trapezoid shape and in addition is furnished with a carefully arranged stone lining of the sides in the form of a low dry stone wall consisting of two rows of stones one upon another. Two thirds of the lining were preserved intact, the third part suffered secondary

12 Dating in the Poznań Radiocarbon Laboratory: Grave H206: Poz-67982/1120 ±30; Poz-67983/1145 ±30; Grave H105: Poz-67984/1180 ±30, Poz-67985/1115 ±30; H136: Poz-76104/1055 ±30; Poz-76105/1080 ±30; Grave H153: Poz-76106/1140 ±30, Poz-76107/1110 ±30; Grave H154: Poz-76108/1170 ±30, Poz-76109/1090 ±30; Grave H143: Poz-79824/1140 ±30; Poz-79825/1160 ±30; Grave H117: Poz-79826/1145 ±30; Poz-79827/1070 ±30.

13 Macháček et al. 2014, 124–140.

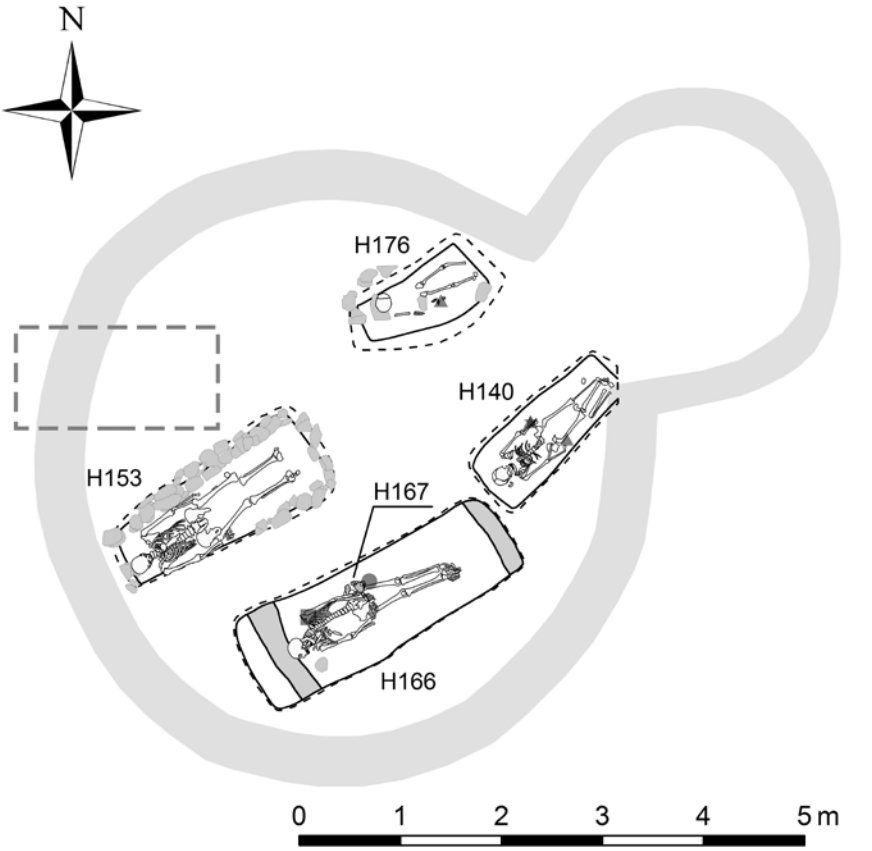


FIGURE 1.9 Pohansko near Břeclav – north-east suburb. Church No. 2. Locations of graves in the interior of the church nave.
AUTHOR OF THE PLAN: P. DRESLER AND COLLECTIVE

damage probably in a later period. The careful arrangement of the pit of grave H153 is quite unique in the cemetery at the 2nd church. No other grave of an adult individual in this cemetery has the grave pit modelled in the same way. All such grave pit arrangements are associated with child burials. This is also true for the other cemeteries in Pohansko, where complete stone lining of a similar form does not appear in the graves of adult individuals. The exceptional character of the grave in the rotunda is also based on the anthropological characteristics of the body buried in it. The man had an extraordinary physical constitution, which distinguished him from the rest of the population buried in the vicinity of the rotunda.

The significance of grave H153 given by its dominant position within the whole cemetery is not diminished by the fact that the person interred in the

grave did not have any grave goods. This is common in Great Moravian graves from the interiors of churches[14] although unusually rich graves may also appear among them (such as grave No. 318 from the basilica in Mikulčice with seven gombiks of gold and silver[15] or grave No. 580 with a sword and magnificent belt fittings from the same church[16]). Other graves in the interior of the rotunda contained objects which, rather than special funerary gifts, were originally part of the everyday life of the deceased. Each of the two non-adult individuals (H140 and H176) was buried with an iron knife deposited at the waist. The one in grave 140 was a little longer (length 8 cm, width 1.2 cm) and had a fuller. The small knife from grave 176 was characterised by a much subtler form with a blade only 6.5 cm long and 0.9 cm wide. The grave also yielded fragments of bronze sheet metal and a small iron tool – a graver with three tips. Their connection with the grave is unclear. Interestingly, another graver with three tips also lay in grave 130/59 at the southern wall of the apse of the church at Sady near Uherské Hradiště.[17] Near the remains of the youngest individual from the interior of the rotunda (H167), a silver earring with an eyehole – important for the dating of the whole building – was found during the washing of earth. The most interesting find from the interior of the rotunda was buried in the grave of the second adult man (H166): a flat bronze handle or case of a trapezoidal shape. Analogical objects appear in the most important church cemeteries in Great Moravia and its immediate surroundings (Mikulčice, Sady near Uherské Hradiště and Zalavár in Hungary). For the time being their purpose remains a mystery.[18]

The burials in the interior may have been linked to a group of graves on the south-eastern side of the building, generally considered to be the most prestigious in medieval churches.[19] The dominant feature among them is grave 154 adjoining the church wall on the outside, where it is positioned in line with the male graves in the interior. Although it is unrivalled as the deepest and largest in the whole cemetery, it contained the remains of a young woman without any grave goods. However, she was by far the tallest of all the women in the population. In that respect, the anthropological characteristics of her body were comparable to those of the male individual in the rotunda. This was most

14 For example, graves of all adults from the church with a cruciform plan at Sady near Uherske Hradiště, its northern chapel and the burial chamber were, with a single exception, without any grave goods, if we ignore the metal fittings of the caskets, see Galuška 1996.

15 Ungerman, Kavánová 2010, 76.

16 Košta 2005, 172.

17 Galuška 1996, 135.

18 Macháček 2015a.

19 Eibl 2005, 234.

likely a group of people with an exceptional social position, who distinguished themselves from the rest of the inhabitants both by privileged access to the sanctuary, and by means of their body stature. Presently we can only speculate on their family bonds as the analyses of aDNA (ancient DNA[20]) have not yet been made.

1.2 Who Was Buried in the Rotunda at Pohansko?

To get a better understanding of who the man buried at a prestigious location in the interior of the rotunda was, we need to compare the newly uncovered church and the adjoining cemetery with the other funerary heritage monuments at Pohansko along with similarly important centres in Great Moravia.

As was mentioned above, the newly discovered church at Pohansko is the second in a row. The first church was excavated by František Kalousek and Bořivoj Dostál as early as 1959–1961.[21] Church No. 1 was a structure of a longitudinal single nave type, 18.65 m long and 7.2 m wide.[22] It consisted of a rectangular nave adjoined by a semi-circular apse, a nartex and an addition. By its longitudinal axis it was the first church oriented in the SW-NE direction, the same as the rotunda in the suburb, which is rather unusual among the other Great Moravian churches. This direction might have been connected to a form of pagan-Christian syncretism, as the main axis of the church fairly precisely aimed at the spot where the sun was rising on the day of the summer solstice.[23] The building from the Magnate Court also distinguished itself from the other Great Moravian churches by its well-preserved original foundations. The wall material was detected *in situ* in a collapsed wall-block. From its position and characteristics, it is assumed that the church walls were made completely of stone. It is therefore not presumed that the foundations bore a low stone footing for a wooden structure or a half-timber building. This is an essential difference compared to the simpler building in the North-East Suburb where a combined timber-stone structure was identified. The walls of the church No. 1 were plastered on the outside, and decorated in colour on the inside by means of the al secco technique – on dry plaster.[24] The church was surrounded by one

20 The deoxyribonucleic acid designated aDNA is not taken from living organisms but extracted from the archaeological bone material or conserved palaeobotanical finds, etc.

21 Kalousek 1961, 138.

22 Dostál 1992; Dostál, Kalousek, Macháček 2008, 63–77.

23 Rajchl 2001; Macháček, Pleterski 2000; Macháček 2000.

24 Hammer 2008.

of the richest Great Moravian cemeteries with 407 graves.[25] Swords were found in four of them, axes in 8, spurs in 32 and golden and silver Moravian jewellery of the Byzantine-Oriental or Veligrad type in 46 graves. However, there were no graves within the sacred space, inside the church nave. We register them in only nine cases in the nartex, but these graves could have been older than the lobby area of the church, built after a certain delay.

The two principal differences between the first and the second church are clear at first sight. Church No. 1 was a more magnificent building, built completely of stone and decorated by colour painting. The surrounding cemetery was markedly richer than the graves at the rotunda in the suburb. At the same time, graves were missing in its nave, i.e. on the sacred ground and the most prestigious place. These differences indicate that the function and significance of the two ecclesiastical buildings were different. Those differences will become more pronounced when we will compare the broader settlement context in which the two churches were built in Pohansko.

The first church was part of a settlement structure that we refer to as the Magnate Court. Its area of ca 1 ha was delimited by a massive square-shaped palisade built in at least two stages whose fortification function is beyond any doubt.[26] The Magnate Court was situated inside the fortified precinct, in its north-west section and is considered the centre of the whole agglomeration. Over 50 settlement features have been excavated there. Within this settlement structure it is possible to distinguish several functional districts:[27] 1) the sacred district with a church and cemetery, 2) the residential quarters with single-space and multiple-space houses on stone and mortar footing, 3) a farming section with pens for livestock, stables, barns, granaries, etc. and 4) large above-ground posthole structures, which could have served an assembly function. Several interpretational models were formulated pointing out at the similarity of the Magnate Court with the royal Carolingian-Ottonian seats – so-called *pfalzes*.[28] A reference was made to the structural parallels between the *palatia*, being the central sections of the imperial *pfalzes* from the 8th to the 11th century, and the Magnate Court at Pohansko, which resembles them in the arrangement and characteristics of the individual buildings. These comprised the residence of the ruler (*caminata*), a hall (*aula*) and a chapel. The *pfalzes* had great symbolic and practical

25 Kalousek 1971; Staňa 2001, 92.
26 Dostál 1969.
27 Dostál 1988.
28 Třeštík 2001, 36; Macháček 2001; Dostál 1975, 253–262.

significance.[29] They were the residences of the rulers of the Frankish, and later Ottonian Empire, who did not reside in a single capital, but moved with their court between their *pfalzes* and *curtis* around the country. This method of governance is called "Reisekönigtum,"[30] itinerant kingship. The "travelling" mode of rule was so engrained that it survived even after the building of permanent residences in the High Middle Ages.[31] *Pfalzes* were the place for holding court conventions,[32] celebrating major religious festivals, and where kings and emperors issued important decrees.[33] It is clear that the so-called Magnate Court at Pohansko was created as an imitation of the *palatium* of a simple Carolingian *pfalz*. The process of adopting the structures and models from the late ancient/Carolingian world, which we call "*imitatio imperii*", is not unusual in other regions at the periphery of the Frankish Empire.[34] The particular mechanisms of the interaction between early medieval Moravia and the East Frankish Kingdom are relatively well-known from written sources. There is no doubt about the close relationships between their ruling dynasties. According to some historians, Rostislav, appointed to the Great Moravian ruler's seat by the Franks, was brought up in Bavaria[35] where he must have come into close contact with court culture and architecture. By another of the alternative hypotheses the Mojmirids even belonged to the broader network of Bavarian nobility and one of their branches permanently resided in Bavaria and later in Carinthia.[36]

In consideration of the above, we take the Magnate Court at Pohansko to be one of several residences of the Great Moravian ruler. It was definitely not the most important seat of power in Moravia, for there no "princely" burials (graves of the members of the ruling dynasty) in the church nave. They were laid to rest in more important Great Moravian temples, among which we count in particular the basilica in Mikulčice – the largest ecclesiastical building within the territory of Great Moravia, with burials of five persons in graves with a walled structure, and the church complex at Sady near Uherské Hradiště, in the eastern part of which, a church with a cruciform plan, Vilém Hrubý uncovered eight graves.[37] Additional individual graves were found in four other

29 Binding 1996, 64.
30 Peyer 1964.
31 Antonín, Borovský, Malaťák 2007.
32 Wihoda 2009.
33 Binding 1996, 64; Renoux 2001, 37.
34 Gabriel 1986.
35 Kučera 1986, 71–72.
36 Macháček 2015b, 483–485.
37 Galuška 1996, 48.

Mikulčice churches, whereby in only two of them (Church No. II and No. IV) they are assumed with smaller or greater probability to be Great Moravian.[38] A special place among the temples in Mikulčice is enjoyed by the undetermined Church No. XII with five graves in the hypothetical interior.[39] In the other Great Moravian churches contemporary graves are absent. The group of Great Moravian buildings with burials in the interior can be extended by 'genetically' related churches in early medieval Bohemia, in particular the Church of the Virgin Mary at Prague Castle, where Duke Spytihněv I was very likely buried at the beginning of the 10th century with his wife.[40] Later ducal graves from the 10th century were found in the basilica of St. George and the rotunda of St. Wenceslas.[41]

The above examples of graves inside church interiors led Mechthild Schulze-Dörrlamm the prominent European researcher from the Romano-Germanic Central Museum in Mainz, to propose that "burials inside churches in the 9th and 10th century belong to the top echelons of political and social hierarchy in Great Moravia and Bohemia," and in Mikulčice these graves "belonged to a small circle of select people, in particular Moravian dukes ... and duchesses".[42]

If so, where did the unusually high number of five graves inside a small and partly wooden rotunda at a peripheral location in the suburb of Pohansko come from? There are several different explanations. Martin Wihoda[43] permits the alternative that the impoverished and weakened (in terms of power) descendants of the Great Moravian ruling dynasty settled in the suburb of the partly dilapidated Pohansko after the collapse of their possessions, which would not be contrary to the conclusions of M. Schulze-Dörrlamm regarding their exclusive right to be buried *intra muros*. Another interpretation is presented based on our find from Pohansko. We presume that, alongside the members of the ruling family, it was also members of the elites from the lower stages of the social pyramid who were buried in churches in the late 9th century.[44] It is likely a member of a local aristocratic family that

38 Poláček 2005, 140; Poláček, Marek 2005, 41, 88.

39 Macháček et al. 2014, 138,144; Kavánová 2003.

40 A critical approach to previous thoughts on burials in the interior of the Church of the Virgin Mary is presented in this book by I. Štefan (Great Moravia, the beginnings of Přemyslid Bohemia and the problem of cultural change). Further see Frolík 2005, 29; Borkovský 1953.

41 Frolík 2006, 183–185.

42 Schulze-Dörrlamm 1993, 619.

43 See the contribution by Martin Wihoda (The second life of the Mojmirid dukes).

44 Macháček et al. 2014, 144–146.

built the rotunda in Pohansko as a proprietary church. This term, in German "*Eigenkirche*", denotes a temple which was held by a person or a group of persons. The ownership, or holding, extended beyond the church building with its furnishings and included the plot with other facilities and the right to exact tithes and other church fees. The patron of the church could also appoint his own priest.[45]

An important role in our deliberations is played by the dominant grave H153 from the interior of the church in which an older man was interred, who was by far the most robust (by his estimated height and weight) in the cemeteries around the 2nd church (see below). With the necessary level of uncertainty, we identify him as the founder of the church. This is mainly corroborated by the position of the grave on the central axis of the building which is considered to be highly prestigious in the early medieval environment. Merovingian graves in churches are often richly furnished.[46] However, identifying a grave as the founder or builder of the church is extremely difficult from the archaeological point of view, if not downright impossible according to some researchers.[47] The debate in the German-speaking region on this issue finally ended in "scholastic" disputes as to whether such graves should be called "Stiftergrab" or "Gründergrab". Regardless of what we call them, it is clear that they are of extraordinary importance for learning about social development in early medieval societies. They are characterised by the fact that they are situated at a dominant position in the church, are structurally tied up with the church and fit into the overall concept of the building even in terms of their grave goods or construction.[48] Horst W. Böhme holds that we can take in consideration a grave of the founder or owner in the case that the burial took place in the church shortly after its construction or when the church was established specially for the purpose of the burial of such a man.[49] At least the first option seems very likely in the rotunda at Pohansko, given the short time of its existence which probably did not exceed 50 years.[50] On the other hand, we should equally admit the possibility that the church could have been both the place

45 Wood 2006, 1.

46 Hassenpflug 1999, 217.

47 Borgolte 1985.

48 Burzler 2000, 39–40.

49 Böhme 1993, 521.

50 Important progress in the discussion about proprietary churches may be brought about, according to Claus Kropp and Thomas Meier, by large-scale excavations which will enable us to examine the church, the graves and the related settlement as a single whole. And it is exactly these conditions that we have created at Pohansko near Břeclav over the many years of systematic research activities. See Kropp, Meier 2010, 105.

of rest of the members of the family who had an ownership or other bond with the building and of the relevant cleric who celebrated the mass there.[51] At Pohansko it could have been the second man buried *intra muros*.

1.3 Osteobiography: A Road to the Past

The question: who was buried in the rotunda at the most prestigious location in the second church of Pohansko can be partially answered by the osteobiography. Thanks to the specific properties of bone tissue we will be able to establish a basic osteobiographical profile the man from grave H153 (Fig. 1.10). Osteobiography is a form of bioarchaeological research that studies the skeletal of one specific individual.[52]

The osteobiographical profile benefits from a special property of bone tissue: its ability to dynamically respond to changing external conditions. Some of these conditions are directly related to the life of an individual. His/her way of life, behaviour, habits, as well as his/her position in society, could leave marks on the bone tissue. As a result, the osteobiographical profile is methodologically closely connected with bone tissue biology and with the bioarchaeological approach applied on population level.[53]

In a similarly dynamic way the skeleton and bone tissue record impacts related to the mortuary behaviour. We can therefore extend the osteobiographical profile to include the taphonomic circumstances related to the burial, the way the mourners treat the corpse, and the reflection of the life of an individual in the post-mortal practices of the given society.[54] Death is immediately followed by decomposition mainly of the soft tissues. The post-mortal practices may modify this decomposition and transform it into a characteristic pattern which is discernible to anthropologists. The decomposition of the body can be advanced by high temperature, a long interval between death and burial, and by interment in a hollow primary container, such as a burial in a casket or a sarcophagus. The decomposition is expressed, for example, by a particular distribution of the individual bones, or by a specific decomposition of bone tissue which can be examined by submacroscopic and histological analysis. It would certainly be beneficial for the osteobiographical portrait

51 Hassenpflug 1999, 228.

52 Stodder, Palkovich 2012.

53 Armelagos, Cohen 1984; Buikstra, Beck 2006; Larsen 1997; Sládek, Berner, Sailer 2003, 301–310.

54 Duday 2009; Sládek, Kavánová 2003.

FIGURE 1.10 Pohansko near Břeclav – north-east suburb. Church No. 2. Grave H153. Slanted photograph.
PHOTO: ÚAM FF MU ARCHIVE

to obtain additional information from other tissues,[55] but under normal circumstances there are only the skeleton and teeth available for taphonomic research. Fortunately, the skeleton bears a number of conspicuous traces with the help of which anthropologists are able to extend our knowledge of burial customs in past populations.

• • •

The presence of graves in the sacred spaces of early medieval churches indicate that we are dealing with an extraordinary event.[56] In addition, burials in the sacred spaces are also marked as graves of individuals with elevated social status. However, this is not always directly related to grave goods.[57] The extraordinary nature of the discovery of graves in the sacred spaces is also underlined by the fact that in Great Moravia graves are found in the interiors of only a few churches.

The discovery of the group of graves of two adult men and three juvenile individuals from the second church at Pohansko is described in some detail in the text above, so here we need only to point out that the graves may hide the bodies of either the most highly esteemed aristocrats or, conversely, they may be early evidence of the rise of the lower aristocracy perhaps even in connection with the emerging tradition of burials of the church founders. Archaeologists and historians address these questions in other chapters of this book. Our task is to use the osteobiographical profile obtained from the skeletal remains and burial characteristics and reconstruct the appearance, life, and death of one of the exceptional individuals from this group, specifically the individual laid in grave H153.

• • •

55 An example of extraordinary conditions when a trace of the soft tissue can be preserved is a body mummified by exposure to cold or extreme dryness.

56 Details regarding the occurrence of burials in early medieval churches and bibliographies are dealt with in the Conclusion in this volume.

57 With the advancing Christian funerary rite the composition of grave goods changes and the elites, being the first to adopt Christianity, are distinguishable by "pure" graves without rich grave goods, as used to be customary in previous epochs.

Why did we select grave H153 for the osteobiographical profile? From the position of the grave within the floorplan of the sacred space we conclude that grave H153 belonged to the most important individual interred in the rotunda and probably the most significant individual from the group buried around the church. Grave H153 occupies the most prestigious location available in the rotunda. When the continuing excavation of the interior of the rotunda exposed the outlines of the graves, the pit of H153 was situated on the main longitudinal axis of the church nave. In addition, the pit of H153 was close to the assumed rotunda entrance. The other graves in the rotunda were positioned in the church nave either in parallel with grave H153 (i.e. grave H167) or they were shifted further inside the rotunda space where they marked the entrance to the apse (i.e. graves H176 and H140).

1.4 The Death and Burial of the Man from the Rotunda

Grave H153 was exceptional for a stone structure preserved on the left side of the buried individual, in the area under the legs, on the side of the right lower limb, and behind the head (Fig. 1.11). Among the graves of adult individuals near the second church at Pohansko the identified stone structure is quite unique.[58] It would also suggest that individual H153 was laid into the free empty space of the tomb. However, after the skeleton was cleaned it showed that it did not bear clear traces of a burial in a tomb, i.e. a hollow space with room around the interred corpse. Free space inside the tomb promotes more aggressive decomposition processes during the decay of the bodily remains, which downgrade the state of preservation of the skeleton. The bones of individual H153, however, are very well preserved both in terms of their number and the quality of the surviving bone tissue. Empty space will also permit more pronounced dislocation of the loose bones than in a burial filled up with deposit. We did not find any shifting of the bones of individual H153 either. Perhaps the only discernible shift was observed in the left femur, which was moved to the side together with the patella and during excavation its back part was turned upwards. But the femur could have shifted after the decomposition of the muscles of the thigh and around the pelvis, which might have resulted in the formation of a larger secondary empty space. The most important sign which in individual H153 suggests decomposition without free space was the position of the ribcage bones. The ribs and sternum are extremely prone to

58 In the cemetery at the second church at Pohansko a stone structure was identified only in burials of non-adult individuals; see, e.g., Macháček et al. 2014; Macháček et al 2016.

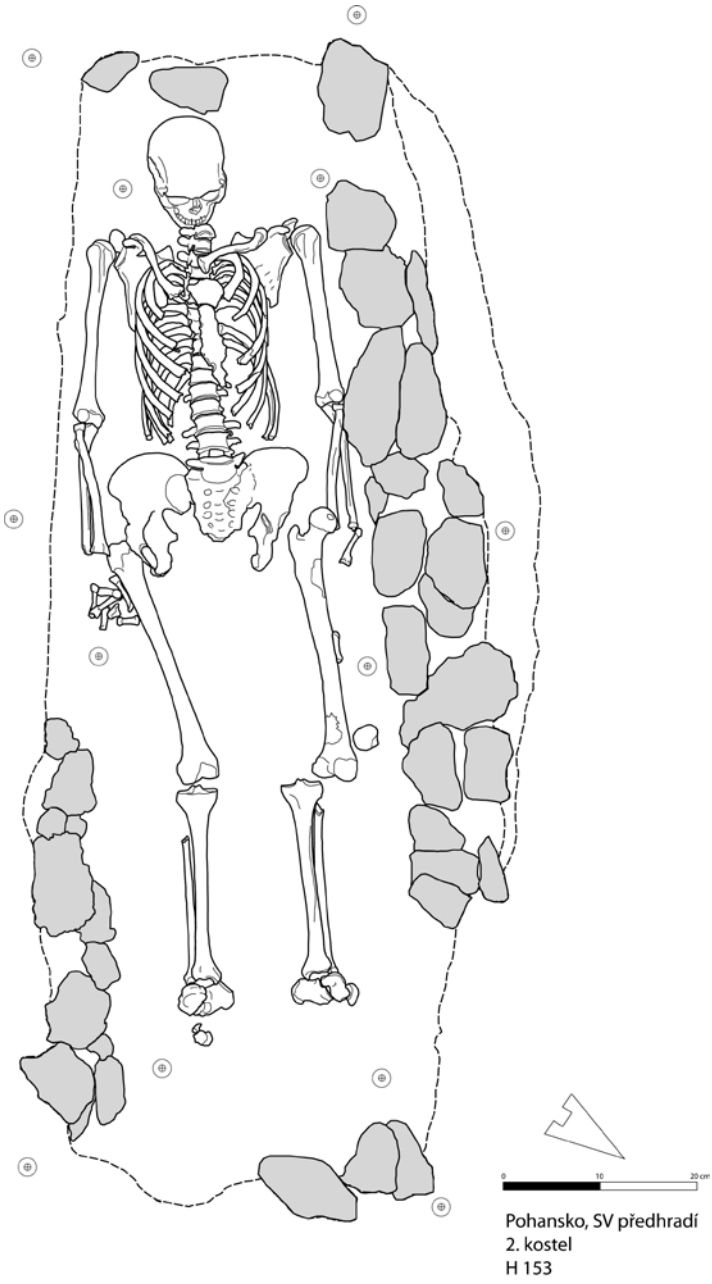


FIGURE 1.11 Pohansko near Břeclav – Reconstruction in drawing of burial H153.
AUTHOR OF THE PLAN: V. SLÁDEK

shifting, being situated in a place where a natural hollow space forms after the decomposition of the soft tissues. The ribcage then loses connectivity and the ribs and sternum are easily relocated to a new position. This was not the case with H153, where the whole ribcage preserves the anatomical position accompanied only by ribcage flattening after the soft organs vanished and the connective tissues of the ribs and the spine decomposed.

To add to the mystery surrounding the burial of this individual it is also the skull of H153 which is unusally set apart. Skeleton H153 is laid out in accordance with Christian custom on the back with the upper limbs alongside the body and the bones of the hand on the sides of the lower limbs. The position of H153 matched the idea of a "proper" burial in an emerging Christian society.[59] Such a conclusion, however, is contradicted by the skull of the individual buried in H153. The basicranium was found with the mandible on the fourth cervical vertebra, while the first three cervical vertebrae are missing. How can this deviation be explained? We do not have a clear answer to this.

It is possible that individual H153 was buried on his back and slightly shifted upwards so that the head touched the side of the grave pit. During the gradual decomposition of the joints of the cervical spine the head could have been moving as far as its final position, where it could lay on the basicranium and be hooked up on the last preserved vertebra. However, we did not record a movement of the rest of the body during the spatial analysis of other sections of the skeleton. This shift of the skull alone seems less probable. First, it is not clear how much free space there was around the head during decomposition given that the body was more likely buried in earth rather than laid freely in the ground.[60] From the position of the skull and mandible we infer that the mandible and facial skeleton maintained a tight anatomical connection.[61] In addition, if the body were to have moved towards the lower limbs or if only the head should have been relocated we would observe evidence in other sections of the spine as well. The remaining cervical section of the spine and the whole lumbar sections have been preserved in the assumed anatomical position excepting the cervical section of

59 Ariés 2000.

60 The moving of the skull away from the expected anatomical position may sometimes be caused by the decomposition of a degradable pad under the head, such as a cushion or wood. However, in H153 we have no direct evidence that his head was supported by a pad during burial.

61 The term "tight anatomical connection" designates an articulation of joints which, in spite of the loosening up of the tendons and the joint capsule, has preserved all of the anatomical characteristics of a movable joint. It can also be applied to other types of joint in the skeleton.

the spine turned on the side. How though can we explain that the first three cervical vertebrae are missing, when bone tissue decomposition is not highly selective and the other vertebrae survived in excellent condition?

The first three cervical vertebrae may be missing in the grave because the head was decapitated in life and the skull was placed in the grave later. Although this way of treating a deceased person – and such an important individual at that – might seem to suggest something improper, history assures us that it would not be so unusual.[62] We could point to several parallel practices concerning how early medieval man treated deceased individuals, including those of a high rank. One example is the find of an adult man from the 12th church in the early medieval site in Mikulčice where the skull was also separated from the body and laid on the basicranium above the left shoulder. Elsewhere, heads were severed, transferred, turned, or buried later. In some examples of early medieval burials, the deceased person even had the head of another dead person placed in the grave. If the head of H153 was chopped off, it might indicate more complex mortuary treatment. Alternatively, the head could have been severed from the body after death and displayed, perhaps to show that the individual was truly dead. This form of vilification, however, did not stand in the way of burying the body in the most prestigious location inside the church. After all, it would not be the first time that a similar burial took place with all honours, although the head had been separated and handled post-mortem outside the burial.[63]

The decapitation theory has its weak points. It is significant that the skull and other parts of the skeleton do not bear visible traces of intentional intervention, which might be expected in the case that the head was cut off using a sword.[64] The only area where a trace of possible decapitation is observable is on the first preserved vertebra. We analysed the surface under an electron microscope and identified a small area with an unusually smooth surface. Could it be a trace of the impact of a sharp object?

When we look closely at the basicranium we find that the surface of the basicranium is strangely altered. This surface modification was the first thing we examined and it seems unlikely to be attributable to a biological process. Perhaps it could be traces of an imprint of the blood vessels or muscles

62 More details, e.g., in Macháček et al. 2014, 87–153; Macháček et al 2016; Sládek – Macháček eds. 2017.

63 We should mention, for example, the nailed head of St. Adalbert and its subsequent burial.

64 We are currently analysing all the traces on the surface of vertebrae and the skull including a microscopic analysis to identify evidence of possible impacts by a sword or axe.

combined with the action of physical and chemical agents. It is also possible that the surface could have been altered after death due to taphonomic processes and it is questionable whether the soft tissues were still present during this alteration or whether it was damage which happened when the remains of H153 were comprised of only the skeleton. We tested this hypothesis together with Margit Berner from the *Naturhistorisches Museum* in Vienna, who is an expert in paleopathological analysis of skeleton remains. When we magnified the surface of the skull base, the area exhibited several possible traces of an imprint of rodent teeth. Currently we are not sure about the interpretation and expect that additional specialised analyses of the bone surface will be necessary. If this hypothesis proved correct, it would mean that the head or only the skull of H153 were damaged by the activities of underground fauna. We know from other find contexts that rodents are capable of aggressively disrupting the skeleton surface and can even relocate some parts of the skeleton or completely damage them. The activity of fauna around the head could also explain why the first three cervical vertebrae are missing. From the results of the taphonomic analysis we were aware that grave H153 was also penetrated by a rodent tunnel near the feet.[65] Further verification is pending whether the shifting ground and the activities of rodents could have caused the skull to move to the position of an anatomically tight connection between the skull and the mandible, though this does not seem very likely. Zooarchaeologists who studied the traces on the basicranium are also sceptical about possible impact by rodents and point to some differences in shape between the evidence found on H153 and that left by rodents. This would bring the possible decapitation of this important man back into play.

1.5 We Return His Appearance to the Man from the Rotunda

Finally, we transferred the remains of H153 to the laboratory. It was preceded by careful excavation supervised by Renáta Přichystalová from the archaeological team of Jiří Macháček, which was followed by cleaning, identification, cataloguing, measuring morphometric and morphoscopic data, and entering the data in the database.[66] When the skeleton was laid out on the worktable,

65 In the feet area we have identified movements of the foot bones and an absence of some bones from the feet.

66 We would like to thank Renáta Přichystalová from the Institute of Archaeology and Museology of Masaryk University and Eliška Schuplerová, Veronika Sabolová and Simona Čerevková from the Department of Human Anthropology and Genetics of Charles University for their help with excavation and laboratory cleaning.

we could at last apply additional analytical methods and make some progress in our research regarding the appearance of this exceptional man.

How do we actually know that it was a man? Sex estimation was made using the well-preserved pelvic bones of the individual. This method is reliable as pelvic bones are extremely sensitive to the development of secondary sex characteristics.[67] Female pelvic bones are significantly different from male pelvic bones and are anatomically positioned for childbearing, while at the same time optimised so that walking does not require much energy. In contrast, the male pelvis could have been optimised during evolution solely for locomotion as there was no need to ascertain the smooth passage of the new-born through the pelvis space. The result of this dichotomy is a number of sexually dimorphic characteristics, the most interesting among them being the shape of the greater sciatic notch (*incisura ischiadica major*).[68] The more closed shape is, the more it is characteristic of the male. The shape of the greater sciatic notch of H153 leaves no doubt that it was a man. In a similar way, all the remaining characteristics on the pelvis attest to the male sex. To be on the safe side we also analysed the metric characteristics of sex using the discrimination function analysis. Nobody in the laboratory was surprised that the metric characteristics unanimously referred to a man.

Inferring the age-at-death of H153 was a more difficult task. As opposed to sex assessment, the skeleton generally does not bear clear marks directly related to calendar age.[69] We have learned from our own experience how misleading it can be to estimate calendar age using biological expressions. The age assessment was undertaken by my doctoral student, Eliška Schuplerová. In the first step we applied all of the age estimation techniques available today for adult individuals. Most of them are based on the fact that the articular surfaces change during senescence, osteophytes gradually form around them, and with the increasing age some articular surfaces even become porotic. A similar process accompanies changes on the pubic symphysis (*symphysis pubica*), where surface degeneration is probably most pronounced and most reliable for estimating age at death. Consequently, during age estimation of H153 we concentrated on the evaluation of joint surfaces and the pubic symphysis. We examined all the individuals from the 2nd church cemetery to obtain a more reliable idea of senescence changes in order to be better positioned to estimate the age-at-death of the individual in H153. But the latter was clearly not falling within a pre-established pattern. Among the compared methods the variance

67 Bruzek, Murail 2006.

68 Bruzek 2002.

69 Schmitt, Murail, Cunha, Rouge 2002.

between age estimates within the examined specimens was within a range of decades. Ultimately we decided to start by documenting the overall state of ageing of H153 and in the second step to estimate the calendar age-at-death. It was obvious at first glance that individual H153 died at an advanced age. This was indicated by the degree of degenerative changes on the articulations, manifestations of senescence features on the pubic symphysis, and some pathological finds that will be dealt with later. These findings alone, however, did not indicate what age the man in grave H153 had lived to. For us the answer also meant deciding which age estimation technique to prefer and which of the age estimations could be considered more reliable. Using five techniques we estimated the age at death of H153 as between 45 and 90 years (the interval estimate of the age was within a range from 35 years to about 100 years).[70] In the end we looked at the average range of the age-at-death in all the individuals from the cemetery and confirmed that some of the age estimation techniques highly overestimate the average age-at-death, while other methods highly underestimate the age.[71] Further processing of the age estimates was therefore based on the presumption that the cemetery comprised of representatives of both younger individuals and individuals of advanced age. Our research was based on the data received from demographers who analysed the demographic structure of various groups including people with subsistence similar to the Early Middle Ages. The most convincing age estimate was based on degenerative changes of the bone surface of the pubic symphysis on the pelvis which corresponds with the experience gained by other bioarchaeological and forensic teams. With the technique based on pubic symphyseal changes, we were able to reliably determine the specific age-at-death of H153 to about 61 years. The error in the estimated calendar age-at-death can also be minimised by determining the relative age-at-death of H153 within the cemetery at the second church. When we arranged the individuals in order of the senescence changes on the skeleton, it became obvious that the man from the rotunda was one of the three oldest individuals in the whole cemetery. This supported our estimate that the man in grave H153 was of an advanced age suggesting a high social status and contributed to the overall exceptional position, as we know from parallels in other chiefdoms and early state communities.

70 The wide range of the point estimate of the age illustrates quite well that the age-at-death estimate using skeletal remains in adult individuals has low reliability, in particular due to the different manifestations of ageing in relation to calendar age.

71 The overestimation and underestimation of the average age-at-death can be supported by the absence of young individuals or individuals of advanced age, when we plot the results of the different methods and concentrate on partial age groups.

An osteobiographical analysis would not be complete without estimating the stature of the individual. This is because the stature helps us reconstruct several important characteristics of the individual and is also helpful indirectly in estimating social status.[72] In the first place, physical stature is linked to the social status of an individual. It has been shown that individuals who are taller achieve a higher social status, measurable in our society, for example, by average income. Stature also indicates good life conditions during childhood; the better the care during growth and development, the more active the growth zones, hence the greater the resulting stature of the individual. It is interesting that variation in stature behaves identically across different societies and subsistence strategies. Human stature can therefore serve as an ecological indicator which we can use to illustrate some aspects of the life trajectory of an individual. However, the estimation of stature from a skeleton has a single inherent technical difficulty. Human stature estimation from a skeleton is easiest using the length of the long bones of the lower limbs but only provided that the proportional relationships between the length of the bones and the height of the individual are identical with the population for which the referential regressive equations were formulated. Otherwise we face the danger that we estimate the stature using equations from a proportionally different population than the one represented by individual H153 and the resulting stature is either overestimated or underestimated. In human stature estimation it might be best to use the sum of all the heights and lengths of the bones contributing to the final stature and, in this way, obtain the so-called direct anatomical stature.[73] Analysis of anatomical stature requires perfect preservation, e.g., the preservation of all vertebrae. But as we know skeleton H153 lacks the first three vertebrae. Despite this, we attempted reconstructing the anatomical stature using techniques which allow us to compensate for some missing vertebrae or whole sections of the spine. Fortunately, previous research has revealed that the cervical section can easily be reconstructed from the lumbar section of the spine and that the missing cervical vertebrae in individual H153 are the least important for the reconstruction of the body stature. We measured all the lengths and heights of H153, reconstructed the missing parts of the cervical section and finally added up all the lengths and heights of the bones to calculate the anatomical stature. It appeared that individual H153 was exceptionally

72 The socio-economic and cognitive parameters associated with the stature of the body have been confirmed by a number of investigations since the beginning of the last century, both in past and present populations, cf., for example, an overview in Case, Paxson 2008.

73 For an overview of the methods estimating the stature with a focus on the second church cemetery see Sládek, Macháček, Ruff, Schuplerová, Přichystalová, Hora 2015; Sládek – Macháček eds. 2017.

tall, standing at about 185 cm. We also attempted to calculate the population specific equations for the long bones and the population at the second church and all estimates based on the long bones confirmed a stature of H153 between 175 cm and 192 cm. The key observation, however, was the finding that in terms of body height H153 was one of the tallest individuals among all the adult men from the cemetery at the second church. This fact may best illustrate the social status of H153. He was an individual remarkable for his stature which probably brought about his social position.[74] Later, we collected data from other early medieval sites in Moravia and Austria and found that, while H153 is a tall individual, within the cemetery at the second church, he is also extraordinarily tall compared to the other early medieval men. In the total collection of 170 men from five other early medieval sites only H243 from the cemetery at the first church at Pohansko near Břeclav had a larger anatomical stature of about 2 cm.[75]

In a similar way to stature, the appearance of the man from the rotunda can be characterised by body mass. In contrast to stature, body mass differs in one essential aspect as it changes considerably throughout the life of an individual. From research into contemporary populations we know that changes in body mass during the lifetime may amount to ten percent.[76] The human skeleton is durable enough that these variations leave few physical traces to indicate the body mass of an individual. However, bones do record the body mass established during the individual's growth between puberty and maturity. After puberty, the skeleton does not respond so readily to body mass fluctuations as to allow us to estimate the current changes. As with the stature, skeletal parts have different reliability with regard to body mass estimation. Research into recent populations has shown that the body mass estimate is most reliable when it is based on the model of an "envelope" of the human body, which is best represented by the width of the pelvis[77] and stature. It means that as a precondition of this body mass estimation the pelvis needs to be perfectly preserved so that we can re-assemble it and measure the pelvis width. Fortunately,

74 In the end, H153 also won the respect of his contemporaries for his size, and soon after the uncovering of the femora archaeologists nicknamed him Arnold, referring to the famous action hero.

75 The stature of H243 from the first church at Pohansko was lower than that of H153, if we estimate the stature from the femora.

76 Ruff 2002.

77 The width of the pelvis is measured as the so-called bi-iliac width, which is the direct distance between the two most remote points on the upper edge of the pelvis. It has been shown that this dimension corresponds best to the radius of the imagined cylinder from which we can calculate the total volume and body mass, in addition this dimension is significantly related to climate changes.

individual H153 has the pelvis width intact and given that we knew the stature, we were able to estimate the body mass of H153 using one of the most reliable techniques. The estimated body mass for H153 was about 93 kg,[78] which is an extraordinary weight for the Early Middle Ages and as with stature, with regard to body mass H153 is one of the largest individuals. This means that individual H153 was of an extraordinary size for that period and, at least in this aspect, he dominated the other adult men of his time.

1.6 How Did the Man from the Rotunda Live?

The osteobiographical profile of H153 may include information about health condition, nutrition, or reconstruction of physical activity based on the examination of upper and lower limbs. This kind of information is also embedded in skeletal remains thanks to the plasticity of the bone tissues and the dynamic relationship with external stimuli, although acquiring this type of data requires sophisticated specialised analyses. The skeletons from the second church were subjected to detailed anthropological analyses carried out in collaboration with a number of laboratories and research specialists. Although many analyses are still being performed, the results already available offer sufficient detail for an osteobiographical profile of the individual H153.

The health of an individual during his or her lifetime is directly reflected on the skeletal remains.[79] For an examination of the health condition of H153 we invited Margit Berner from the *Naturhistorisches Museum* in Vienna. Margit has conducted paleopathological research for many years, including research and analysis of sets of medieval bones. Margit systematically analysed the changes that could be observed on the teeth or bone surface of H153. She confirmed that the skeleton of H153 bore a record of many features related to an advanced age of death. In addition to evidence of ageing she found other specific paleopathological features. For example, on the external surface of the neurocranium she identified irregular structures which refer to traces of a response of the bone surface either to infection (scalping?) or anaemia due to an infectious disease. Rather surprisingly the teeth did not exhibit any dental caries, which is probably a consequence of a greater portion of meat in the

78 The body mass estimated by applying new equations using the head of the femur was lower, at about 88.8 kg, but the relative position in terms of body mass between H153 and the other investigated individuals was unaffected. Population-specific equations for individuals from the second church estimated the body mass of H153 between 84 and 91 kg. Sládek – Macháček eds. 2017.

79 Aufderheide, Rodriguez-Martin 1998.

diet in contrast to narrowly delimited nourishment relying exclusively on cereals. This would again point to the high-ranking social status of the man from the rotunda. Appropriately for his age, individual H153 also bore characteristic signs of degenerative changes on the limb joints, which probably did not significantly affect his movement. On the other hand, H153 suffered from considerable pain related to a spine disorder. the eighth thoracic vertebra of H153 was almost completely destroyed, and must have been very painful and restricted his movement. There were also traces of other changes to the spine such as an ossified connection between the seventh to ninth thoracic vertebrae, which meant that this section of the spine was immobile.

Similar occurrences of synostoses were observed in other parts of his skeleton. The overall expression of the observed pathological changes may therefore be related to a number of disorders, such as a healed compression fracture (as a result of fall from a great height, for example). However, it could also be the sign of a spinal inflammatory disease or aseptic inflammation caused by the autoimmune condition known as the Bekhterev's disease. Finally, this may be the result of a septic infection, such as tuberculosis.[80] Margit Berner managed to identify another unusual attribute on the remains of H153: an irregular calcified structure with a total size of about 2.5 × 2.5 cm. Thanks to carefully maintained field records, we determined that this object was found somewhere in the abdominal area and during decomposition was relocated between the last lumbar vertebra and the sacrum. The identified calcified structure must have been a result of a combination of a biological and a pathological process, but it is difficult to relate it to any specific disease. It could be a concretion of renal or urinary calculus, a calcified renal or urinary bladder cyst, or it is a trace of cystic hydatidosis (i.e. a disease caused by a parasite of the *Echinoccocus* genus). Although in many of the listed symptoms we are still unaware of a direct association with a particular disease, from the overall expression of the pathological changes it is obvious that the man from the rotunda suffered from a number of quite painful diseases. He was also hindered by the limited mobility of his spine towards the end of his life. While those observations may indicated that the man in grave H153 had a poor health during his lifetime, quite the contrary may in fact be true. In paleopathological research the presence of long-lasting ailments, especially if they are healed, indicates the high resistance of the individual and the care provided by those around him. This contradiction is termed the "osteological paradox" in paleopathology.[81] Weak

80 It will be possible to confirm or reject TBC in H153 only based on the presence of specific microbial DNA (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*).

81 See, for example, Cohen 1994.

individuals or those attacked by a dangerous disease fall victim to the illness more rapidly so that it cannot be manifested in the bone tissue or bones. As a result, in the paleopathological record they are marked as "healthy" (i.e. without the presence of signs of a disease on the skeleton). In contrast, individuals with a strong immune system or excellent health care can resist illness better and even when they die later, the duration of the illness was long enough to leave a trace on the bones. In the osteological material these individuals will be recognised as "ill", although their paleopathological record provides evidence to the contrary. Analysis demonstrates that they were "healthier" in life and received better health care than those described in the skeletal record as "healthy". Given the diverse mix of indicators of various diseases we can say that during his life individual H153 was probably quite resistant, and he found support in his everyday background consisting, for example, in quality food, especially in his childhood, and he probably received the best health care that early medieval society could provide.

The journey of individual H153 through life can be described in more detail through analyses targeted at the internal structures of the bone tissue in order the gain information about the diet of the man from the rotunda. The analysis of the skeletal remains from the cemetery of the second church was carried out by Sylva Kaupová (National Museum in Prague), who also analyzed the skeletal remains from grave H153.[82] The results were then compared with those from other cemeteries in Great Moravia. Sylva Kaupová examined the bones with the aim of acquiring data on stable isotopes of carbon and nitrogen. These isotopes are related to the overall quality of food and the share of animal proteins.[83] However, they may also be used to assess the importance of cereals such as millet and wheat, as well as of fish in the diet. The latter is particularly important from a cultural point of view, as it may be related to fasting practices associated with Christianity. The exceptionally well preserved state of skeleton H153 permitted a thorough analysis of the stable isotopes and Sylva Kaupová succeeded in analysing the diet of the population from the second church at Pohansko and the man from the rotunda. The results of the analysis significantly enhanced the osteobiographical reconstruction of H153 and showed that individual H153 was nourished by high quality food with a high share of animal proteins such as meat and milk products. The share of meat in the diet of H153 was the highest in the cemetery at the second church at Pohansko, but it was also the highest in comparison with the elite from the cemeteries in

82 The following paragraphs sum up some of the research results, presently being prepared for publication.

83 Katzenberg 2008.

Mikulčiceat the second and third church. This result correlates well with the data on the stature and the finding that H153 must have had quality food even during his period of growth and development. We can therefore conclude that, in regards the quality of nourishment, individual H153 was on par with the Great Moravian elite of his time. The most important conclusion drawn from this analysis was that the individual buried in H153 ate a lot of fish during his lifetime, and in that respect his diet was not different from that of many other members of the Great Moravian elite. Interestingly, the higher consumption of fish was confirmed particularly in individuals buried in the interiors of churches. This might mean that it was the individuals interred in the sacred spaces of churches who represented the first group that embraced the new Christian customs, gradually establishing themselves in Great Moravia and later contributing to the rise of an archaic state in that territory.

Another morphological indicator that we assessed is linked with the robustness of the upper and the lower limbs. We wanted to determine how intensive the physical activity of the man from the rotunda was. Activity is most reliably estimated by means of biomechanical indicators measured on transversal cross-sections of the long bones, such as the humerus, femur, and tibia.[84] Each bone is anatomically oriented and placed on the table, then scanned by tomography. Next, measurements are taken and displayed on the computer. This method allows us to non-invasively reach the inner boundary of the cortical bone tissue. Each of the cross-sections is digitised and the properties of the cortical bone tissue are calculated using special algorithms. The last and most crucial step of the analysis is to use the acquired data in relation to body mass and the biomechanical length of the long bones. The goal of this procedure is to determine the mechanical loading on the bone without the impact of body mass by isolating the effect of size. By this modification we will get to the parameters related to the stress on the upper (i.e. manipulation) and lower limbs (i.e. mobility). All the operations related to assessment of bone robustness were carried out thanks to our long-term collaboration with the *Veterinärmedizinische Universität* in Vienna. Before we plotted the standardised biomechanical values and created graphs of the individuals from the rotunda, we assumed that H153 would be one of the most robust individuals in the group. We expected that his striking size would have something in common with high physical activity. The resulting data however was quite surprising. In all the examined cross-sections H153 measured only average to below average robustness. Particularly surprising was the below average robustness in the right arm bone, which suggests that the stress on his right upper limb

84 Ruff 2008.

was below average compared to the stress in his male peers. If he used a sword at all, then that was not a regular activity. A similar measurement of average to below average in his lower limbs indicates limited ambulatory activities.[85] These surprising results presents additional questions. While the man from the rotunda exceeded the others in his size, he did not need to exert physical activity beyond the average of his time. What might a day in this man's life have looked like? Was he forced to do intensive physical labour, or did he take advantage of the impact of his persona, lead negotiations, and act as the head of his *familia*? Currently, the evidence at hand cannot sufficiently answer these questions, but the results of our analysis at least demonstrates that the members of the elite in Great Moravia were not necessarily involved in strenuous physical activity, even when being among the tallest and largest individuals of their time.

1.7 Resulting Portrait

The analysis of H153's remains allows us to paint a portrait of what the man was like in life. He was an older man with a striking stature that undoubtedly commanded attention in his time. At 185 cm, and with a body mass of 93 kg, his physical presence exceeded his contemporaries. From birth individual H153 received quality food and animal products constituted a significant portion of his nourishment as an adult. His diet included a high level of fish, indicating that he actively participated in Christian dietary restrictions. H153 lived to an advanced age of approximately sixty-one years, and towards the end of his life suffered from a number of degenerative and pathological afflictions which restricted him and were quite painful. Living with these diseases meant having an excellent bodily constitution and extraordinary care and support from those around him. Despite his massive figure, individual H153 did not exhibit signs of great physical exertion; in terms of the activity of the upper and lower limbs he was average compared to the other men from the second church. This could signify that he was more active as the head of his *familia* rather than being involved in rigorous activities like fighting.

The nature of H153's burial leaves no doubt that he was a respected man. He was interred in the most prestigious location on the main axis inside the

85 One of our students, Vojtěch Fikar, working on his diploma thesis, attempted to analyse the outline of the acetabulum to establish whether H153 might have preferred riding a horse to walking or running. However, it showed this could not be used as conclusive evidence and as a result we are presently unable to test this hypothesis.

church nave close to the entrance. His survivors paid special attention to his grave, which they lined with a stone structure forming a vault. This was by all means an exceptional feature in the entire cemetery. However, out of fear or worry, the survivors also manipulated the skeleton and probably relocated its skull. Alternatively, the grave of the man from the rotunda may have been the target of an invasion of rodents who care very little about extraordinary humans. The social position of the church's founder, who must have been in all respects an extraordinary man in Great Moravian society, should be clarified in the next chapters.

CHAPTER 2

The Austrian Danube Region in the Decades Around 900

Roman Zehetmayer
Translated by *Barbara Juch*

2.1 On the Constitutional Structure in the Late Ninth Century[1]

Throughout history, (today's) "Austrian" Danube Region represented an interactive zone of different cultures and lordships. This was also the case in the Early Middle Ages. In the eighth century, for example, Bavarian and Frankish territories, which went as far as the river Enns, coincided with that of the Avars and the Slavs living in the north of the Danube.[2] The population of the region was quite diverse, with Slavs and Bavarians living side by side to the west of the river Enns, while Slavs, Avars,[3] and presumably individual "Germanic-speaking social groups" inhabited the lands to the east from that river.[4]

The expansion of the Franks under Charlemagne changed the area significantly. After his victory over the Bavarians in 788, he disempowered their duke, Tassilo, and dissolved the hitherto existing duchy of Bavaria and integrated it into the Frankish Empire.[5] Tassilo had allied himself with the neighbouring Avars, who, after 788, were also attacked by Charlemagne, who conquered them after several victorious campaigns.[6] The defeat of the Avars pushed the frontier of the Frankish Empire beyond the Enns, up to the Raab in Pannonia.[7]

In 796, this new annexed region was merged with Bavaria and placed under a common prefect named Gerold (I), Charles' brother-in-law. Presumably, after Gerold's death during an additional campaign against the Avars in 799,

1 This article has been adapted and translated within the international project "Frontier – Contact Zone or No Man's Land? The Morava-Thaya Region from the Early to the High Middle Ages" Funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) – project no. I 1911–G21 and the Czech Grant Agency (GAČR) – project no. GF15–34666L. It was translated by Barbara Juch.

2 For a general overview, see for Wolfram 1995; Wolfram 1995a.

3 Pohl 2002, 322; Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 31.

4 Pohl 2002, 310f.

5 See for Becher 1993, 58ff.; Becher 2005, 39ff.

6 See for Pohl 2002, 314ff.; Csendes 1970, 93–107.

7 See for Wolfram 1995, 221, 223.

 | DOI:10.1163/9789004392878_003

a number of territories were separated from the prefecture of Bavaria. One of them was the eastern part of the former duchy of Bavaria, i.e., the Traungau, which is located in Upper Austria, between the rivers Traun and Enns in Upper Austria. Separate was now also the newly conquered region east of the Enns, namely Lower Austria south of the Danube, including those parts of Pannonia, which had meanwhile become Frankish. Finally, the third separate territory was Carantania, which had been annexed by the Bavarians in the mid-eighth century, and covered what is now Carinthia, northern Styria and eastern Tyrol and presumably parts of Slovenia. All those territories, as well as those lands south of Carantania that later became Carniola, were incorporated into a new prefecture of the so-called Bavarian "Ostland" (East-land). During the second half of the 9th century, the prefects of the Ostland were called margraves (*comites terminales* or *marchiones*).[8]

To the north, the Danube constituted the border of the empire, and only a narrow strip on the left bank belonged to the Frankish Empire.[9] It was not a linear border, but a wider transition zone. The present-day Mühl- und Waldviertel were most likely a largely unpopulated forest area, which was not by chance called "Nordwald" (North Forest).[10] Some archaeological discoveries point to connections with the local population with Bohemia, as fields of grave mounds of a similar form are found in South Bohemia, today's Upper Austrian Mühlviertel, and in the adjoining Waldviertel, providing a reference point to cultural-political affiliation in the 9th century.[11] There are also a few written sources that provide reference to the local Slavic population.

The Franks felt relatively safe in the south-west of the Weinviertel, up to the Danube-Wagram area around Stockerau, and here monasteries were commonly given land by the rulers.[12] To the north, the Moravian Empire established itself and probably brought large parts of the Weinviertel under its control. There are, however, no concrete written documents for this. It is important to note that in this region the East-Franks were apparently unable to dispose of property, a fact which is underlined by the lack of legal transactions over local land.

In regards to the Danube area, its western part, up until the river Traun, remained part of the prefecture of Bavaria, which the emperor Louis the Pious, after his accession to power in 814, gave first to his son Pippin, and afterwards

8 Wolfram 1995a, 175ff., 298ff.; Wolfram 2012, 167. For overview also see for Stieldorf 2012, 48ff., 65ff.

9 For detailed information, including the map provided: Zehetmayer 2007, 22.

10 Particularly see for Lechner 1937, 15.

11 Breibert 2010, 54–65. Also: Obenaus 2008, 198.

12 See for Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 46f.

in 817 to his other son Louis the German who were appointed as kings of this district.[13] This sub-kingship was still under his father's sovereignty and included the so-called Ostland on the east which was ruled by prefects who were subordinated to the sub-kings.[14] As a result of the Treaty of Verdun in 843, King Louis the German received the entire eastern part of Francia as autonomous kingdom.

Since the Bavarian settlement, Upper Austria had been subdivided into large areas now known as "Gaue" (*pagi*), of which the best known is Traungau.[15] These areas, however, had no political and administrative definitions, although county borders were often drawn in reference to *Gaue*. Since the eighth century, Upper Austria has continually appointed counts, but in most cases their districts are only roughly defined.[16]

As mentioned before, the areas east of the river Traun were integrated into the so-called (Bavarian) "Ostland" and were put under the control of their own prefect or margrave. During the ninth century, however, the Ostland experienced a few essential administrative changes. The division into a northern and southern march ("Grenzgrafschaft")[17] in 871 is of particular interest for this paper. The northern part was transferred to the Margrave Arbo, and essentially comprised the Traungau area, the East Frankish part of Lower Austria up to the Vienna Basin ("Wiener Becken"), and possibly also the region adjoining the east up to the river Raab.[18]

The Danube area, situated in the Bavarian "Ostland," was divided into smaller counties up until 871.[19] Their exact locations and territorial expansion are difficult to determine, even though specific counts are sometimes mentioned, and even specific borders. However, one county-center may have existed around Linz, where a count named Wilhelm is mentioned in the 820s. Whether this county encompassed the whole of today's Traungau or only a part, or whether it even went beyond the Enns and included areas of the Lower Austrian Mostviertel, remains unclear.[20] In 844, an area near the Zöbernbach

13 See for Hartmann 2002, 26f.

14 Wolfram 2012, 166f.

15 Zauner 1960, 208f.

16 Zauner 1960, 209, 216.

17 Wolfram 1995, 268.

18 For detailed discussion on the growth and inner organization of the Ostland, see for Zehetmayer 2008, 35f. with note 6.

19 These counties may well have been founded here after the establishment of the Ostland, and not just in the year 828, as was the case with former Carantanian regions Wolfram 1981, 313–17.

20 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch 1, 33f. Also see for Traditionen des Hochstifts Freising, 470, 548.

(Zöbern creek) in southeastern Lower Austria was designated as the border between the counties of Count Ratpot and Count Rihhari.[21] Rihhari's seat of power was supposedly at "Steinamanger."[22] It is clear from the description of the border and from official documents that Ratpot, who at that time was a prefect of the then still undivided Ostland, also had his own county in the central area of Lower Austria, where the former Roman fortress Tulln acted as an important base.[23] In the west, this central county presumably bordered on that of Count Wilhelm (I), so that a total of three counties are to be found in this border region (1. around Linz, 2. Lower Austrian central area, 3. county of Rihhari around Steinamanger). The extent to which the county of Ratpot in the central part of the Lower Austria extended to the east is not known, except that it reached the Zobernbach in the southeastern direction.

After Ratpot's abdication in 854, which will be discussed later, Carloman,[24] the son of King Louis the German, succeeded him as prefect of the Ostland. However, unlike his predecessor, he did not reserve the "county in the central area" for himself but appointed Wilhelm (II) and Engelschalk as counties, close relatives, maybe sons of Count Wilhelm (I).

During the ninth century, the counties may have undergone some spatial changes.[25] Even after the division of 871, the northern border was divided into three counties, but they were probably not governed by counts, but merely by *vicarii*, i.e. the representatives of the count.[26] It remains unclear whether these counties can be equated with the three counties mentioned above.[27]

Our area of investigation was part of the diocese of Passau, whose bishop was also an influential figure in the East because of his abundant land holdings.[28] Only the south-east of present-day Lower Austria belonged to

21 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 84f., No 7a: […] *in marca, ubi Radpoti et Rihharii comitatus confiniunt*. Ibid. 93f.

22 Wolfram 1995, 250.

23 Wolfram 1995a, 310f.

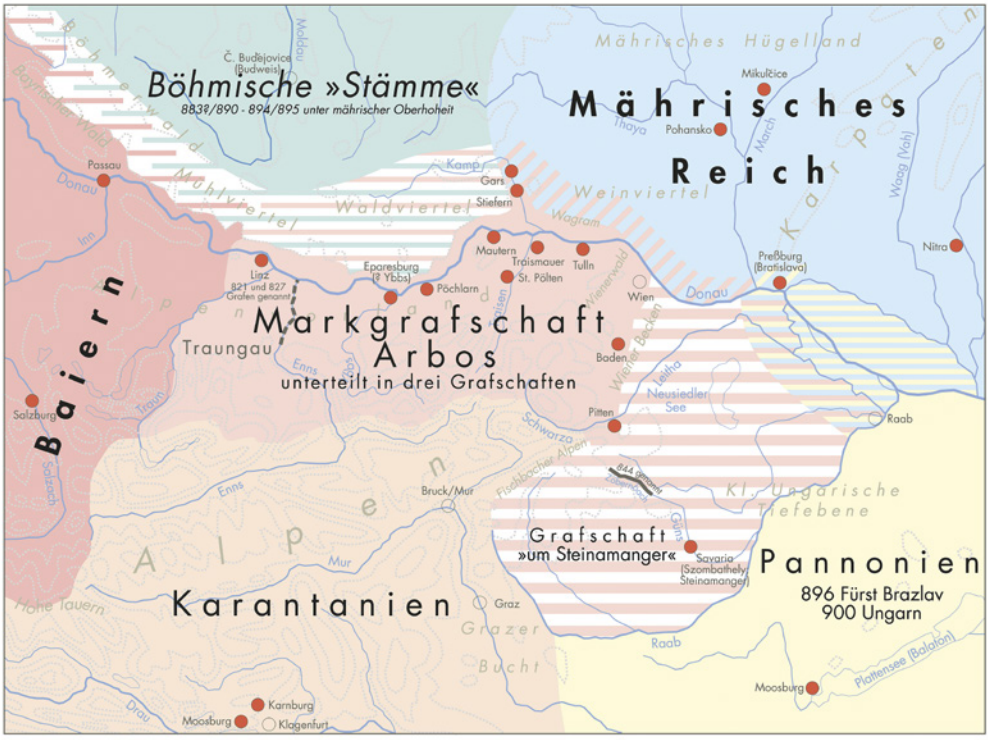
24 See for Hartmann 2002, 68ff.

25 Weltin 1983, 207.

26 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 155, No 7a.

27 Thus it remains unclear whether Margrave Arbo also held supremacy over the area of the former "county around Steinamanger". For it remains unclear whether the Count Arathous, who is mentioned in the Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 54–56, No 5b (877 VI 28), is identical with Margrave Arbo; Mitterauer 1963, 164; Wolfram 1995a, 319. Even if this is the case, there is no compelling proof of the extension of Arbos' domination area to the "county around Steinamanger". Arathots/Arbos' participation could have had other causes. The Raffelstetten Customs Code mentions three counties, although the areas east of the Wienerwald were presumably already dominated by the Magyars. See for Zehetmayer 2008, 35f. with note 6; Weltin 1983, 206, note 5.

28 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 67ff.



SCHICKSALSJAHR 907. DIE SCHLACHT BEI PRESSBURG UND DAS FRÜHMITTELALTERLICHE NIEDERÖSTERREICH

Herrschaftsverhältnisse im österreichischen Donauraum 895/896

FIGURE 2.1 Centres of power in the Austrian Danube basin around 895/896 (Richard Hübl). Taken over from Roman ZEHETMAYER, Zur Geschichte des niederösterreichischen Raums im 9. und in der ersten Hälfte des 10. Jahrhunderts, in: Schicksalsjahr 907. Die Schlacht bei Pressburg und das frühmittelalterliche Niederösterreich, ed. R. Zehetmayer, St. Pölten 2007, pp. 17–29, here p. 22.

the (Arch-) diocese of Salzburg.[29] Because of the great distance and the special requirements in a mission area, the Bishop of Passau installed his own representatives ("Chorbischöfe"), who had their seats probably at Lorch, in St. Andrä/Wördern on the eastern border of the Tullnerfeld and at the entrance to the Vienna Basin.[30]

29 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 19, 92ff.

30 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 50f., 57–67, No 5, 5c–5f.

Important royal and economic centers in Upper Austria were established in many royal courts, such as Mattighofen, Ranshofen, Wels, Linz, and Lorch. Those centers and their extensive land holdings were often visited by rulers.[31] In the Ostland prefecture, the most important centers were established in formerly Roman forts, e.g., Tulln.[32] In the year 869, the town of Baden, which also has Roman origins, was a royal palatinate ("Pfalz").[33] There was also a royal economic court at the former Roman fort Traismauer. Originally, the Carolingians handed it over as fief to the Archbishops of Salzburg, and finally, in 860, completely transferred it to him.[34] Mautern[35] and St. Pölten also show traces of Roman origins. St. Pölten had been an economic centre of the Bishops of Passau in the ninth century, but there was also a small monastery under the influence of the abbots of Tegernsee. This monastery was the only one in the entire Carolingian Lower Austria.[36] West of the Enns, however, there were several significant monasteries, such as Kremsmünster, St. Florian, Mondsee or Mattsee.

The political history of the region under discussion was mainly a function of the conflict with Great Moravia. The Eastern Franks were almost permanently in a state of war with the Moravians, especially during the second half of the ninth century.[37] Under these conditions, the prefects and margraves in the Ostland, had to act independently. This, however, caused mistrust in the East Frankish kingdom and lead to further conflicts. In 854, King Louis the

31 Deutinger 2006, 328f. with reference 25–27, 342; Zauner 1960, 210ff.; Haider 1991, 11–16.

32 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 98f. No 8a, and 100f.: Louis the German for the Regensburg Church: *Quapropter noverit omnium fidelium nostrorum praesentium scilicet et futurorum industria, qualiter nos cuidam ex primatibus nostris nomine Ratboto medietatem unius fisci qui vocatur Tullina situs in regione Pannonia cum omnibus appendiciis eius, videlicet qui ad ipsum fiscum pertinent, tam mancipiis quam vineis terris pascuis et cetera, quae dici aut nominari possunt, in proprium contulimus, ea ratione si fidem suam erga nos inviolatam servasset. Sed quia ipse a nobis totis viribus se alienavit et fidem atque iusiurandum omni infidelitate fraudavit, placuit serenitati nostrae eandem medietatem memorati fisci ad nostram dominationem recipere atque pro absolutione divinę recordationis antecessorum nostrorum augustissimorum scilicet imperatorum et pro remedio animae nostrae et corporis salvatione ad sanctum Hemmerammum contradere atque confirmare* eqs.; see for Wolfram 1992, 63–71. In Tulln, in the year 859, a nobleman named Ratbod ruled over the land: Deutinger 2004, 52; Annales Iuvavenses maximi, MGH SS 30/2, 744 ad 854; see also Brunner 1979, 142.

33 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 105–107, No 10.

34 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 86–88, No 7b, and 93 also on the problem that possibly not all fiefs were originally royal fiefs.

35 On the archeological situation in the Early Middle Ages Schmitsberger 2006, 429–32.

36 See for individual records in St. Pölten im Mittelalter 2009.

37 See for Dümmler 1853, 1–85; Wolfram 1995a, 87ff., 310, 317ff.; Goldberg 2004, 67–94; matter of dispute: Bowlus 1995.

German presumably dethroned Prefect Ratpot due to his interactions with the Moravians.[38] Two years later he appointed his son Carloman for the office. This gave the son the chance to establish a position that was almost independent from his father, which in turn led to military conflict.[39] Louis the German first tried to strengthen the position of those who were close to him, such as that of the Archbishop of Salzburg, to whom Louis gave extensive goods in the year 860.[40] The dispute escalated in 861 when Louis made fall Count Ernst, the father-in-law of his son. In the Ostland, Carloman, in reaction to these events, replaced counts loyal to the crown with those loyal to him. In the following years there were open clashes between Louis and his son, who allied himself with the Moravian prince Rostislav. The dispute resulted in the short-term imprisonment of Carloman but in 865, father and son were reconciled, establishing a period of relative peace in the Ostland.[41] In 869, the Eastern Franks began a large-scale offensive against the Moravians, in which the two counts Wilhelm (II) and Engelschalk played a leading role. The Franks were initially victorious until Svatopluk, the nephew of the previously defeated Rostislav, assumed leadership of the Moravians and defeated the East Frankish army. Wilhelm and Engelschalk died in this battle (871).[42] This defeat weakened Carloman and led to the division of the Ostland, for Carloman had to give up a number of counties on the Danube, which King Louis entrusted to the powerful aristocrat Arbo[43] whereas Carloman was essentially left with formerly Carantanian territory. Arbo, however, was foreign and thus not accepted by parts of the local aristocracy, resulting in fierce feuds. These feuds, however, provide valuable insights into the inner structure of this border area, which will be discussed at a later point.

2.2 The Shaping Forces

As has been demonstrated, the king continually intervened in the destiny of the investigated area, but it was the regional rulers who truly shaped it. As was also already argued, it was the Passau Bishops who had major influence here. In addition, there were other bishops and monasteries, mainly Bavarian, which

38 See for quote in note 32.

39 Wolfram 1995a, 188 with comm. 498 and 316–21; Wolfram 1995, 251–59.

40 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 86–88, No 7b.

41 On this dispute Pearson 1999, 134ff.; Kasten 1997, 498ff.

42 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 73f., 110.

43 See for Arbo Mitterauer 1963, 188ff.; Wolfram 1995, 256; and, most recent Wolfram 2012, 343. Arbo is seen as „ancestor" of the important noble family "Aribonen"; Dopsch 1993, 62f.

partly established extensive estates, thus providing for colonization as well as for the territorial, economic and pastoral saturation of the area. For example, the Bishops of Regensburg in the Tullnerfeld or at the Erlauf had a strong presence. An important base of Roman origin was the *Herilungoburg* (Pöchlarn). Its designation, however, may not derive from the German "Harlungensage" (Harlungen legend), but rather from a personal name.[44] The Bishops of Freising had many possessions in south-eastern Lower Austria, in the Wachau, and probably also in the Mostviertel. The southern parts of the valley of the river Kamp were colonized from Krems and here Stiefern developed into a local center.[45] The Archbishops of Salzburg had an extensive estate around the former Roman fortress of Traismauer, where, in 833, Pribina, who had been expelled by the Moravians, was baptized. Salzburg, however, also received the economic courts of Melk, Hollenburg, Loiben in the Wachau, and in the south-east of Lower Austria.[46] In addition, the Salzburg Archbishops had abundant possessions in the west of today's Upper Austria. Abbeys such as Niederaltaich, Tegernsee, Kremsmünster, and Mondsee were the most important landowners in the region. Monasteries appear not only along the Danube, in the foothills of the Alps, and in south-eastern Lower Austria (the so-called "Bucklige Welt"), but also in the southern Weinviertel.[47] In addition, priests were the holders of land.[48] A central settlement and economic area was the Wachau, which was lucrative because of the abundance of winegrowing. There, almost all the ecclesiastical institutions had extensive possessions.[49]

Besides the church, the most important shaping force of the region were the members of the nobility. Whereas in the west of the Enns nobles have already established estates ("Grundherrschaften") by the time of the Bavarian duchy (before 800), the territories east of the Enns had to be colonized after their integration into Francia to provide security for this periphery and to make it economically profitable. Immediately after the conquest, nobles, whose families often possessed property in neighbouring Upper Austria, became interested in this promising region and established their own estates.[50] It is assumed

44 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 20–28, No 3–3c, 32f.

45 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 105–112, No 10–10b.

46 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 86–88, No 7b.

47 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 28–30. No 3d (893 × 22), 54–56, No 5b (877 VI 28), No 4–4c, 36–45.

48 See for Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 84f., No 7a (844 IX 15), 86–88, No 7b (Comments on proprietary churches of priests).

49 See for Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 38f., No 4a, 43f., 73f., No 6, 73f., 86–88, No 7b, 91f., No 7d and passim.

50 Weltin 1983, 24ff.; Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 156f.

that the nobility could accumulate property and establish power without royal permission, given the fact that the greatest possible number of warriors was necessary for the development and safeguarding of the region.[51] It seems that anyone with sufficient resources could and establish estates in the region.

The earliest documented aristocratic landowners to the east of the Enns are the prefects and margraves themselves, who are to be counted to the supra-regionally active and so-called "Reichsaristokratie" (Aristocracy of the Empire) – a fact which was also the case for many of the "Sippen" (clans) in Lower and Upper Austria.[52] Of the early prefects, such as Gottfried or Gerold (II), one can draw only some references to family relations and occasionally to land ownership.[53] Gerold's successor, Ratpot (832/33), was deposed in 854, but was able to keep his own possessions in the frontier area and his descendants continued to play a quite significant role. Among his kin was Count Kundhari, who likely possessed extensive, though widely scattered, property in the borderland.[54]

The most important of the aristocratic families to rule both in Upper Austria and in the "Ostland" were the Wilhelminers.[55] The first secured appointment for a member of this family in the East is the year 821.[56] Around the middle of the ninth century the Wilhelminers succeeded in colonizing parts of the modern Mühlviertel[57] and the area around the mouth of the river Kamp.[58] Already in the first decades of the ninth-century, they must have seized power and established estates east of the Enns. There the family possessed considerable

51 On the discussion of autonomous legal rights Hechberger 2005, 226ff.; for Lower Austria Weltin 1992, 103–24; Weltin 1993, 464.

52 Mitterauer 1963; Störmer 1973, 200ff.

53 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 13f., No 2a; Wolfram 1995a, 300 with note 570; Conversio, MGH Studien und Texte 15, 120; Wolfram 2012, 118; Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 118; Annales regni Francorum, MGH SS rer. Germ. 6, 169.

54 See for Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 124f., No 12 (900/02) and 105–107, No 10: *His ita peractis contigit piissimum Karlmannum Hludouuici regis filium ire orientales partes cum caterva non modica veniens ad Padun. Tunc ibi inquisitione facta a Peretkunda in palatio coram Karlmanno, si aliquis sibi contradicere voluisset proprietatis suae potestatem, ni ius habuisset tradere ubicumque voluisset. Paulatim Kundharius comes surrexit dicens se omnem proprietatem illam habere iure hereditario per traditionem Ratpodi et inde eam minime posse ad aliquam domum Dei condonare.*

55 Mitterauer 1963, 104ff., 178ff; Störmer 1973, 227f.; Mitis 1950, 534–549; with caution Bowlus 1995, 269ff. The considerations on the origin and early genealogy, which are mainly written by Bavarian historians in several essays of recent years, need not be of interest here.

56 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 36; on the following see for ibid. 33ff.; Traditionsbuch Mondsee, 177f., No 74 (826 II 27).

57 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 25–27, No 3c (853 I 18).

58 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 28–30, No 3d (893 × 22).

holdings near the river Perschling. In 834, the family handed over parts of this property to the monastery of St. Emmeram at Regensburg.[59] Pertinent documents show that colonisation in this region was already well advanced as it mentions a church, a *domus* – probably one of the family´s seat, including a court and other buildings. The brothers Wilhelm (II) and Engelschalk followed Wilhelm (I), so both must have been his sons, or at least close relatives. The brothers were closely connected to the king's son Carloman, who had received authority over the Ostland in 856 and who appointed them as counts.[60] Both played an important role in the war against the Moravians in 869/71 and achieved important initial success and were even in temporary control of the fortifications of the Moravians. The fighting, however, flared up again, and both brothers fell in battle.[61] This was followed by a division of the Ostland, and established Arbo as margrave in the northern part. The sons of the two fallen counts, who evidently had a strong support in the "Ostland", claimed the power of their fathers and did not accept Arbo's appointment.[62] After the death of King Louis the Younger in 882, the opportunity for rebellion was more favourable and the brothers, supported by relatives and Bavarian nobles, were able to expel Arbo for a short term. As a result, there were protracted and bloody conflicts, in which the Moravians were always allies, either of one or the other side. Fighting finally ended in 893, after the death of six sons of Engeschalk and Wilhelm effectively put an end to the family of the Wilhemins. The estates of the family were confiscated by the East Frankish king.[63]

Their biggest enemy, Arbo,[64] was deposed in the course of the disputes in 882 but was eventually able to return to office with the help of the Moravians and pursued a largely independent policy. This course resulted in further conflict and in 898 Arbo was removed from office once more by East Frankish King Arnulf. Soon afterwards, Arbo was appointed as margrave again.[65] In the

59 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 23f., No 3b, 28–30, No 3d, 142, No 12g.

60 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 73 ad 871 and 110 ad 884; Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 102, No 9, where Wilhelm II is defined as *comes*; in detail ibid. 35.

61 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 73f. ad 871.

62 See for Dümmler 1853, 47ff.; Wolfram 1995, 256ff., 269ff.; Bowlus 1995, 208ff., 272ff.; Bowlus 1973, 759–75; Bowlus 1997, 57–61; Zehetmayer 2007, 22ff.; Krah 1997, 214ff.; Pearson 1999, 150f., 159; Dopsch 2002, 168ff.

63 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 110–113, 122; Annales Alamannici, 53 ad 893; Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, No 3d, 35.

64 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 73 ad 871, 110ff. ad 884.

65 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 132 ad 898: *Istius ergo dissensionis et disruptae pacis inter supranominatos fratres* [the sons and followers of prince Zwentibold] *Arbo comes Isanrico filio suo instigante instructor delatorque atque proditor esse convincitur et ob hanc causam praefectura sua caruit ad tempus; quam non multo post accepit.*

following year, there was a heavy conflict between his son Isanrich who ruled in the former Roman fortress Mautern and King Arnulf. Isanrich was conquered and arrested but was able to escape and fled to the Moravians, who supported his subjugation of an area near the border the border where he governed independently for a time.[66]

Another Count, Rihhari, possessed a county in the south-east of Lower Austria. In addition, he – or a relative of the same name – also ruled over a county in the Mattigau (north of Salzburg) and possessed abundant property over the entire Upper Austrian region.[67] Count Gundakar, on the other hand, was initially a supporter of Carloman and led his army in the clashes against Louis the German. However, Gundakar changed sides and joined Louis.[68] Eventually, he also lost his favour with Louis and ultimately joined the Moravians and was killed in battle against the Eastern Franks in 869.[69]

In the mid-880s,[70] another noble family established its center of power in the northwestern part of St. Pölten. Their first documented member, Witigo, may be identical with the count who received possessions in the Styrian Admont Valley in 859.[71] His son Heimo had a close relationship with King Arnulf and served him as *ministerialis*. In 888, Heimo earned royal privilege,[72]

66 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 133 ad 899: *Interim autem Isanricus tyrannidem suam sine cessatione contra regem excercens. Quod vehementer rex accipiens decrevit navigio, quia iam tunc infirmus corpore fatigaretur; civitatem Mutarensem, in qua ipse Isanricus intus erat, aggredi; quod et factum est. Illo vero residente, rege quoque et suis fortiter viriliterque superantibus atque civitatem obpugnantibus, demum ipse Isanricus vi conpulsus cum uxore et his, quae ad se pertinebant, exivit et imperatori sese presentavit.*

67 *Traditionsbuch Mondsee*, 113f., No 14 (805 I 20), 183f., No 80 ([around] 814 XI 30); Mitterauer 1963, 45f., where a relation to the Wilhelminers is established, 117f.

68 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 56f. ad 863: *Interea rex collecto exercitu specie quidem quasi Rastizen Margensium Sclavorum ducem cum auxilio Bulgarorum ab oriente venientium, ut fama fuit, domaturus, re autem vera ad Carantanos filium expugnaturus accessit. Qui revera se ad id temporis defenderet, nisi proditione Gundachari comitis sui deciperetur incautus; qui totum pene robur exercitus secum habens quasi vada fluminis Swarzahae hostibus prohibiturus cum omnibus copiis transivit ad regem et praelatus est Carantanis, sicut ei prius occulte promissum est, si dominum suum fraude decepisset. Et hic quidem praefecturae dignitatem hoc modo promueruit.* On the events Krah 1987, 201ff.; Wolfram 1995a, 317f.

69 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 67f. ad 869.

70 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 75f., No 6a.

71 Mitterauer 1963, 144ff.

72 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 77f., No 6b: *Arnolfus* […], *qualiter noster quidam ministerialis nomine Heimo serenitatis nostrae magnitudinem deprecatus est, ut in orientalibus partibus in pago Grunzuuiti dicto, ubi Arbo terminalis comes praeesse visus est, super proprietatem suam legalem sibi rectitudinis potestatem in proprietatem concessissemus. At nos petitionibus eius libenter annuentes memores crebri devotique eius obsequii decrevimus*

and was granted, among other things, autonomous jurisdiction over the local free men and serfs. Heimo still had to visit the local court gatherings which were directed by Margrave Arbo.[73] As a result, he remained integrated into the community of the local nobility. Heimo is also referred to as *iudex* in the customs regulation of Raffelstetten, together with 40 other nobles, a point which will be analysed in greater detail later. In the Heimo´s privilege of the year 888, there is a stipulation that states an individual from the Moravian Empire who is denied access to Heimo's court, he was granted the right to to report his case to the Margrave (Arbo).[74] This suggests that Moravians must have been repeatedly present in this border region and probably also traded here.

The politics of the region was not only dictated by those supra-regional comital families, but also shaped by the local nobles. Many of them may have been vassals (*homines*) of count families and it is assumed that they had to support those families in the numerous feuds. In most cases there are hardly any written sources regarding them[75] and only the *Annales Fuldenses* reported incidentally that the Wilhelminer family had their own *homines* in the feuds

ita fieri. Dedimus quidem ei cum consensu praefati comitis eiusdem hereditatis suae rectitudinem perpetuo iure in proprietatem. Et iussimus hos celsitudinis nostrae apices inde fieri, per quos sancimus firmissimeque iubemus, ut nec praenominatus comes nec ullus iudex publicus vel ulla ex iudiciaria potestate persona ausu temerario contra hanc nostrae institutionis auctoritatem in easdem proprii sui iuris causas aut homines eius tam ingenuos quam servos ibidem habitantes distringendos vel ullas inlicitas occasiones seu ullius praessurae calamitatem ingerre vel exactare praesumat. Sed liceat illi successoribusque suis eandem rectitudinem secure atque tranquille habere ac possidere in aevo eo videlicet rationis tenore, ut homines eius inde cum terminali comite, ubi ipse elegerit, urbem aedificent et, si quando necesse eveniat, ad semetipsos defendendos cum rebus suis illuc confugium faciant, custodias cum caeteris more solito ad communem suae salvationis vel circumspectionis contra inimicorum insidias tutelam vigilanter exhibentes. Ad publicum iam fati comitis mallum scilicet idem Heimo seu vicarius eius legem ac iustitiam exigendam vel perpetrandam pergat. Et si forsan de Marauorum regno aliquis causa iustitiae supervenerit, si tale quidlibet est, quod ipse Heimo vel advocatus eius corrigere [*ne*]*quiverit, iudicio eiusdem comitis potenter finiatur. Insuper etiam statuimus ipsique Heimoni praestitimus, ut universa debita legalia de gente inibi in proprio suo residente terciaque pars bannorum sub eodem hereditarii iuris tenore sibi in proprium ex integro persolvantur, qui dicuntur civiles banni; caeteraque debita cuncta ad integrum sine alicuius partitione de eodem populo aeternaliter illum successoresque eius pertineant.* – On this Zehetmayer 2008, 45ff; Wolfram 2012, 347ff.

73 See for Schulze 1973, 164, 339.

74 See for the text in note 69.

75 In detail Zehetmayer 2008, 39ff. and passim; for a general overview see Salten 2013.

against Arbo and his Moravian allies. Those *homines* were cruelly mutilated in the feuds.[76] Many of them were most likely local vassals.[77]

One question which arises is whether the group of military supporters also included unfree persons who carried weapons and supported their masters militarily (as it was later the case with the "Ministerialen"). There are a few indications that support this argument. In the year 901, King Louis the Child handed his possessions north of the Danube (possible in the Mühlviertel) and peasants ("Holden") over to the monastery of St. Florian, along with his *servus* Perahart.[78] In sources from around 900, a *servus* generally refers to someone of a higher rank within the dependent *familia*.[79] This is confirmed by comparisons with other royal *servi* of the later Carolingian period, who commonly had larger properties.[80] This suggests that Perahart must have belonged to the ruling group of the royal *familia* and presumably received his possessions through his own efforts. Given the peripheral location of those possessions, he must have carried weapons in order to be able to defend them. His example, displays that it was possible for higher-ranking serfs to gain considerable success within the royal *familia* during the Carolingian period.[81] One can assume that the noblemen were accompanied in war by foot soldiers who were not

76 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 111 ad 884: […] *homines vero illorum* [sc. The Wilhelminer] *quosdam sine dextra levaque reversi sunt*. The events are to be dated to 882.

77 There are some other references to local acting vassals in other contexts, which are not easy to interpret: When a member of the Wilhelminers (Rutpert) 893 had to flee to the now seemingly allied Moravians, it is reported that he was accompanied by very many others, without these fellow combatants can be defined closer; Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 122 ad 893: *Frater quoque eius* [William III, namely Rutpert] *cum Maravanis exul delatiscens insidioso consilio ducis cum aliis quam plurimis interfectus est.* – The conflict between King Arnulf and Arbos son Isanrich, who was entrenched in Mautern and remained there for a while, was already mentioned. This suggests that Isanrich must have had a stronger armed retinue; Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 133 ad 899.

78 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 124f., No 12 (901 I 19): *At nos* [der König] *divino compuncti amore beatique Floriani confisi intercessione consultui cunctorum procerum nostrorum gratanter satisfacientes necnon prenominato ipsius episcopii provisori libenti animo annuentes decrevimus ita fieri* […] *per hoc preceptum nostrum Christi martyri Floriano absque ulla retractione perenni iure pro remedio anime nostrę parentumque nostrorum ęterna liberation contulimus atque tradimus. Insuper etiam quicquid servus quidam noster nomine Perahart in aquilonali parte Danubii proprii in terra et mancipiis in ipsa marcha tenuit*. Zum Folgenden auch Zehetmayer 2008, 41f.

79 See for example Zotz 1991, 6ff.

80 Deutinger 2006, 74.

81 In general on the *servi* of the King at that time Zotz 1991, 10; Deutinger, 2006, 74.

free.[82] That much results from the provisions of the *Lex Baiuwariorum*, and from other legal sources in other regions.[83]

Every now and then there is also evidence that noblemen had to "recruit" allies for their feuds; the *Annales Fuldenses* of the year 884 recorded that the Wilhelmines were able to find allies in relatives and other Bavarian nobles for their feud against Arbo. Despite this, they remained outnumbered and the family had to recruit more troops, "so that it now had a stronger force."[84] The Wilhelmins, following their defeat by Arbo and his Moravian allies, fled to King Arnulf in Pannonia. To attack against the Moravian prince Zwentibold, they recruited soldiers from among Pannonians.[85]

In sum, these individual observations suggest that the higher nobility constantly had armed vassals around them. It is assumed that the armed troops included dependent serfs, but their specific role remains unclear. Overall, the size of the armed retinue was insufficient for feuds that extended beyond the local framework (such as against the margrave or the Moravians). In conflicts of greater dimension, relatives and other nobles (with their retinue) had to be consulted.

2.3 The Austrian Danube Area on the Eve of the Catastrophe of 907

Shortly before the collapse of the power of the Franks east of the Enns in 907, a few texts were written which offer particularly useful insight into the region's constitution at that time. Those documents also provide indications on the threat that eventually led to an abrupt decline. Prominent among them is Customs Regulation of Raffelstetten,[86] which was presumably written

82 See for Szameit 2008, 73f.

83 Lex Baiwariorum, 298f., No II 5; details on vassals during the Carolingian Period, see for Schulze 1973 49f., 158; Annales Bertiniani, 88 ad 832; Hechberger 2005, 130f.

84 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 111 ad 884: *Nec minus ipsi praedicti pueri* [the Wilhelminers] *consulunt quosdam primores Baiowarici gentis collatisque propinquis ac undique copiis fortior manus in id tempus illis adstabitur*.

85 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 112 ad 884: [...] *quibusdam Pannoniorum secum assumptis* [...].

86 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 151–154, No 13 (902/03–907): *Nuntios suos Theotmarum archiepiscopum, Purchardum Patauiensis ecclesie presulem et Otacharium comitem dedit, ut hoc in suo loco iuste legittimeque corrigerent. Et isti sunt, qui iuraverunt pro theloneo in comitatu Arbonis: Walto vicarius, Durinc vicarius, Gundalperht, Amo, Gerpreht, Pazrich, Diotrich, Aschrich, Arbo, Tunzili, Salacho, Helmwin, Sigimar, Gerolt, Ysac, Salaman, Humperht, item Humperht, Engilschalh, Azo, Ortimuot, Ruothoh, Emilo, item Durinc, Reinolt, Eigil vicarius, Poto, Eigilo, Ellinger, Otlant, Gundpold, item Gerolt, Otperht,*

between 902/3 and 907.[87] This legal record came about when King Louis the Child, after a complaint of Bavarian nobleman, ordered Arbo, Archbishop Theotmar of Salzburg, Bishop Burchard of Passau and Count Otachar to determine the tolls and customs tariffs in the borderland. The commissioners then came together with 41 nobels, who are partly documented in other sources as well.[88] The meeting was held east of Linz, in place called Raffelstetten. The protocol shows rich commercial activity, especially between Bavaria and the borderland. Instead of emphasizing the economic activities of the merchants, the document focuses on the trading activities of local landlords.[89] Salt, an essential commercial product, was transported over land and water and provided supplies in the Ostland, as well as having products for sale or exchange on the market. Other products, such ascattle, food, wax, and slaves, were also traded.[90] The document lists several markets: Rosdorf (near Aschach on the Danube), Linz and on today's Lower Austrian soil *Eparesburch*, which can probably be equated with Ybbs/Danube, and Mautern. The fact that other easterly location, such as Tulln, is not mentioned, has led scholars to the conclusion that the march had already been eliminated by the Magyars.[91]

The customs regulation also refers to a market of the Moravians,[92] where salt was sold. The absence of a specific place name suggests that the market was not held at any singular locality. Furthermore, the regulation mentions Slavs from Bavaria (*Bawari vel Sclavi istius patrie*) who also worked as traders.[93] These Slavs are clearly distinguished from those coming from Bohemia and from the land of the Rugi (*Sclavi vero, qui de Rugis vel de Boemannis mercandi*

Adalhelm, Tento, Buoto, Wolfker, Rantolf, Kozperht, Graman, Heimo. Isti et ceteri omnes, qui in hiis tribus comitatibus nobiles fuerunt, post peractum iuramentum interrogati ab Arbone marchione in presentia Theotmari archiepiscopi et Purchardi presulis Patauiensis ecclesie residente cum eis Otachario comite in ipso placito in loco qui dicitur Raffoltestetun retulerunt loca thelonio et modum thelonei, qualiter temporibus Hludwici et Karlomanni ceterorumque regum iustissime exsolvebatur.

87 See for Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 154.

88 See for Weltin 1983, 24ff.

89 Mitterauer 1969, 116; Johanek 1982, 213.

90 Mitterauer 1969, 115ff., Luschin von Ebengreuth 1897, 397–444; Ganshof 1966, 197–224.

91 See for Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 154ff.

92 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 153f., No 13: *Si autem transire voluerint ad mercatum Marahorum, iuxta estimationem mercationis tunc temporis exsolvat solidum I de navii et licenter transeat; revertendo autem nichil cogantur exsolvere legittimum.*

93 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 152, No 13: *Si autem Bawari vel Sclavi istius patrie ipsam regionem intraverint ad emenda victualia cum mancipiis vel cavallis vel bobus vel ceteris suppellectilibus suis, ubicunque voluerint in ipsa regione, sine theloneo emant, que necessaria sunt.*

causa exeunt),[94] whereas the "nationality" of the Rugi is particularly difficult to interpret.[95] It is possible that they were perceived as Slavic inhabitants of the former settlement area of the "germanic" Rugier north of the Danube (around Krems).[96] Another possibility is that they were Russian merchants.[97] Nevertheless, the document suggests that trade with Bohemia was common and that marketplaces were interspersed along the Danube, Riedmark to the north, as well as along the river Rodl.[98]

The Raffelstetten customs regulation is particularly compelling because of the 41 nobles mentioned here, all of whom are defined as *iudices*, i.e. judges. They had to provide information about tariffs and tolls in Arbo's territory along with other *nobiles* that were not referred to as *iudices*. This suggests that the term "judge" did not refer solely to the activity at Raffelstetten meeting (for instance, as lay judge). These judges presumably exercised jurisdiction in their estates to a large extend without any restriction of the margrave.[99] The political circumstances suggests that it was hardly possible for the margrave to influence the jurisdiction of powerful nobles and it is unlikely that the Wilhelminers would have approved of that, given that they were in strong opposition and that they did not hold any authority in the Lower Austrian region after 871. Similar arguments can be made for several other powerful nobles like Kundhari who had many estates in Lower Austria and important vassals in his retinue.[100]

In 902/903 the Slav Joseph donated the Bishop of Freising near Stiefern in the valley of the river Kamp,[101] where the East Franks had advanced consider-

94 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch 1, 153, No 13: *Sclaui vero, qui de Rugis vel de Boemanis mercandi causa exeunt, ubicunque iuxta ripam Danubii vel ubicunque in Rotalariis vel in Reodariis loca mercandi optinuerint, de sogma una de cera duas massiolas, quarum utraque scoti unum valeat, de onere unius hominis massiola una eiusdem precii, si vero mancipia vel cavallos vendere voluerit, de una ancilla tremisam 1, de cavallo masculo similiter, de servo saigam 1, similis de equa. Bawari vero vel Sclavi istius patrie ibi ementes vel vendentes nichil solvere cogantur*.

95 For further reference see for Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch 1, 158.

96 Zöllner 1952, 117f., 111f. with reference to the so-called „Russian" or originally „Rugian" Mühl (river), comp. Wolfram 1995a, 37f. comm. 135; Weltin 1993, 58.

97 Ganshof 1966, 214 f.

98 Comm. 95.

99 Brunner 1928, § 93.

100 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch 1, 155.

101 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch 110–112, No 10b (902/903): *Notum sit* […], *qualiter quidam venerabilis vir* […] *Joseph* […] *domo Dei Frigisingensis ęcclesiae* […] *Inde praescriptus vir Joseph perveniens ad dominum Vualdonem episcopum ad Stiuinnam* […] *tradidit in manus praetitulati episcopi Uualdonis* […] *quasdam rês proprietatis suae in eodem loco, quas ipse Joseph dominum episcopum hominesque illorum cavallicando circumduxit, hoc*

ably further north than elsewhere. Joseph lived according to Slavic law, as evidenced by the witnesses with Slavic and Biblical names, who explicitly refused to act according to Bavarian law. It is often assumed that Joseph must have ruled over a largely independent principality, situated between Moravia and the Frankish territory, with the center in Gars am Kamp (Thunau)[102] where, according to archaeological research in recent decades, must have been a significant center of power.[103] As justification was put forward that Joseph was called *venerabilis vir* in the charter, a title, which for laymen is allegedly only used for magnates.[104] A legitimate counter-argument is that this form of taking possession of land was not just reserved for kings and princes but was customary in the case of more extensive donations. The same can be argued for vassals, as demonstrated by the case of the Wilheminers. The term *venerabilis vir* was not used exclusively for princes in Bavarian sources at that time, but also for honoring counts and other nobles.[105] Joseph must have been a Slavic nobleman with some supra-regional authority. But it is unlikely that some independent principality existed between the East Franks and the Moravians, with its center at Gars am Kamp and Joseph as its prince.

As to the retinue of Joseph, it should also be noted that three of his *homines* bear biblical names, indicating that they must have been baptized. The others had – except for one person that cannot be identified – Slavic names, though they were probably also Christians. In any case, there was no Bavarian name. The nine witnesses from the episcopal entourage, some identified as local landowners,[106] bear Bavarian-East-Frankish names. No ethnic mix has apparently taken place yet within the groups of vassals, although the region had long witnessed interactions between Franks and Slavs.

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est in ipsa marca de superiori via, quę ipsa via vadit in duos rivolos ac deinde usque ipsi rivoli cadunt in flumen qui dicitur Stiuinna; […] *Denique vero alteram peregit traditionem: in eodem loco res proprietatis suae tradidit in manum domini episcopi* […], *quę ipse res iam olim ab antecessoribus suis domo Dei tradita fuerunt annuatim illis censum persolvendi de domo Dei.* – See the map in Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch 1, 111.

102 Some historians also refer to him as Joseph of Stiefern, i.e., according to his seat in Stiefern; such as Brunner 2006, 274. It is, however, not very probable that such an important person would have had his seat in a place where at the same time there was an estate of the Bishop of Freising. Also, the formulation of the charter according to which Joseph has come to Stiefern in order to make his gift.

103 Summing up, Obenaus 2014, 61ff., which elaborates on the fact that in the first half of the ninth century, there was a considerable growth in population, which indicated a central power.

104 Wolfram 1995a, 58f. and comm. 299.

105 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch 1, 124f., No 12.

106 Lechner 1937, 26.

Around 900, the Magyars posed an increasing threat. The first confrontations of the East Franks with the Magyars that took place in Lower Austria are reported for 881.[107] In 892, the East Frankish King Arnulf allied himself with the Magyars against the Moravians. In 895 the Magyars began to settle in Siebenbürgen and on the upper Tisza. From there, they increasingly exerted pressure against the West.[108]

The death of King Arnulf in 899 further reduced the ruling power of the Empire, especially since his successor, Louis, was still a child and was hardly capable of acting out his duties independently. At that time, Liutpold, who worked in Carantania as count ("Grenzgraf"), obtained a more powerful position and established himself as the most dominant nobleman in Bavaria.[109] After another invasion of the Magyars was repelled in 900, Liutpold built Ennsburg[110] on the border of Arbo's march, a sign that he had considerable military power or that he was in conflict with Arbo, who in fact did not participate in the battle at "Pressburg".[111]

Increasing pressure from the Magyars spurred the Bavarian nobility to action, and they began an offensive attack against the Magyars that resulted in a devastating defeat at "Pressburg" in July 907.

2.4 The Austrian Danube Region in the First Decades of the Tenth Century

It is quite difficult to make sense of what was happening in Lower Austria during the decades that followed 907. There are almost no contemporary written sources. Considering that in the years immediately preceding the battle of "Pressburg" an enormous number of writings emerged that related to the territories east of the Enns, it is just as important to underline the abrupt and almost complete cessation of the production of sources.

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107 Annales ex annalibus Iuvavensibus, MGH SS 30/2, 742 ad 881.

108 In particular Dopsch 2002, 177f. with the older literature.

109 Reindel 1953, 1ff., Schmid 2002, 204ff.

110 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SS rer. Germ. 7, 134f. ad 900, Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 125–127, No 12a, 146f., which assume that Count Kundhari was responsible for military issues on the border of the Enns.

111 The fact that the battle actually took place in Pressburg/Bratislava (Annales ex annalibus Iuvavensibus, MGH SS 30/2, 742: *Brezalauspurc*) is uncertain, since the prince Brezlaus, who gave the name to the location of the battle, had his seat not in Pressburg but in Pannonia. There, the battle might have taken place (Friendly lead Béla Szöke).

The loss of the Bavarian army in 907 was disastrous and resulted in the death of numerous prominent leaders: "Grenzgraf" Liutpold, Archbishop Theotmar of Salzburg, Bishop Zacharias of Brixen, and Bishop Udo of Freising, all perished during the conflagration. The Salzburg Annals speak of a *bellum pessimum*,[112] but there are also many other relatively near-contemporary historiographical works or obituaries that characterize the battle as extremely bloody.[113] The military catastrophe of 907 decimated the nobility, weakening their position to the point where the survivors largely withdrew from Lower Austria.[114]

Given the dearth of reliable sources, it is difficult to fully assess the internal structure of the regions east of the Enns after 907. It seems that the Magyars assumed control at that time without simultaneously building up administrative structures west of the Viennese forest. It is likely that they were simply satisfied with pursuing toll levies and lootings.[115] This is supported by archaeological findings, which indicate that there was a continuity in settlement at several places after 907. Furthermore, the findings suggest that the Magyars had hardly built up permanent or longer-term settlements in today's Lower Austria.[116] One exception is the so-called "Magyar settlement nest" in the north-east Weinviertel.[117] In the village of Gnadendorf, a Magyar horse-trot was recently found and can be dated to the beginning of the 11th century.[118] Larger Magyar grave fields are found in Lower Austria only on the eastern border in areas that buffer Magyarian territory, such as in Bruck an der Leitha.[119]

This is also why the Magyars did not completely destroy the existing territorial and settlement structures, as the new rulers made a profit of these indigenous inhabitants. The argument for continuity in settlement is supported by the fact that ecclesiastical landlords, were able to regain their former possessions. Therefore, after an interruption of more than half a century, it was somehow still possible to establish the exact location of the former possessions.

Nevertheless, in a few individual cases, it is assumed that Magyar troops were stationed in former Roman forts or elsewhere. This is illustrated by the former Roman camp Vienna, for which the Magyars established an own

112 Annales ex annalibus Iuvavensibus, MGH SS 30/2, 742.
113 See for the documents in Reindel 1953, 62–70, No 45.
114 Weltin 1990, 418.
115 Csendes 1991, 95.
116 See for Felgenhauer-Schmiedt 2006, 253–268; Obenaus 2008, 200ff.
117 Most recently Schuster 1995, 297ff.; Csendes 1991, 100f.
118 See for Das frühungarische Reitergrab 2006.
119 In particular Kreitner 2000, 182–199; Obenaus 2008, 206; Obenaus 2012, 167f.

name, "Bécs".[120] Since the mid-tenth century, "mixed" cemeteries appear in Lower Austria, in which besides clear elements of the indigeneous culture, Magyar dress accessories have been found.[121] This does not necessarily mean that Magyar and "Bavarians" lived together peacefully, but rather that some "Bavarians", in attempt to garner favour with their Magyar overlords, had accepted the traditional costumes of the upper class.It is unlikely that social life in this region was purely harmonious. As early as 979, the foothills of the Alps in Lower Austria were described as a region deserted for many years, which now needed a fortification against the Maygars.[122] A simultaneous charter of the Bishop of Passau speaks of a *barbarica devastatio* done by the Magyars.[123] The frequent finds of Magyar arrows in large numbers also suggests that there were armed conflicts.[124]

It is possible that a report of Thietmar von Merseburg refers to the conditions east of the Enns.[125] The bishop reports of a battle against the Maygars at the Traun in 949. In this battle, the Bishop of Regensburg and other Bavarian *principes* were involved on the Bavarian side. The report refers to a threat of orientales by the Magyars, and it is quite possible that the former inhabitants of today's Lower Austria, and the Regensburg Bishop intervened.[126] It is also by no means certain that these *orientales* had in fact been living east of the Enns. For a long time, the circumstances surrounding the death of Bishop Drakulf of Freising in 926, who supposedly drowned in the strong rapids of the Danube near Grein,

120 Csendes 1991, 101f.

121 Summary in Obenaus 2008, 212f.; Obenaus 2012, 169.

122 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 205f., No 17 (979 × 14): […] *quia vir venerabilis Uuolfkangus Reganespurgensis ecclesiae episcopus, quae est constructa in honore sancti Petri principis apostolorum necnon et sancti Emmerammi martyris Christi, adiens celsitudinem culminis nostri innotuit auctoritati nostrae in terra quondam Auarorum iuxta fluviolum qui Erlaffa dicitur locum quendam esse qui Steininachiricha nominatur, quem per multa annorum curricula desertum ipse de Bauuaria missis colonis incoli fecit, qui ut tutiores ibi ab infestatione Ungrorum manere possent, petiit nostram serenitatem* […].

123 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 128, No 12b (971/991): *Notum sit omnibus Christi fidelibus presentibus scilicet et futuris, qualiter tempore Piligrimi episcopi synodo aggregata semel in Lauriacensi aecclesia oratorio sancti Laurentii martyris Christi, secundo autem in basilica sancti Agapiti martyris Mutarun orientales diocesaneos suos prestito iusiurationis sacramento, quod suę sanctę aecclesię iuris in decimatione contingeret interiacentis provincię inter Anesum fluvium et Comagenum montem synodice percontans concordi responsione in unam hanc convivere sententiam penitus videlicet ac continuatim omnem decimationem infra prescriptos limites Anesi scilicet fluminis et Comageni montis ante proximam barbaricam suę desolationis devastati.*

124 Summary in Obenaus 2008, 212.

125 Thietmar von Merseburg, Chronicon, II, 27, MGH SS rer. Germ. NS 9, 72.

126 Csendes 1991, 99f.

on the border between present-day Upper and Lower Austria, provided evidence for the continuity of land estates east of the Enns, as his journey was interpreted as a visitation of these demesne. More recent scholarship argues however that he travelled to Pannonia on a diplomatic mission.[127] It should be noted that the veracity of the document is uncertain as it was an oral testament recorded long after his death.[128]

Even though this document does not provide concrete proof, it does not change the basic assumption that there must have been some degree of continuity in power structures. One needs to bear in mind that is no coincidence that there is no single royal diploma or any other documentary record of a legal transaction from east of the Enns during the first half of the 10th century. It is highly probable that the peasant population, except for a few local administrators, was essentially on its own.

For a long time, the Nibelungenlied's reference to Margrave Rüdiger residing in Pöchlarn played a greater role in the discussion of the situation of today's Lower Austria in the decades after 907. The constitutional structures described in this epic in the course of the Burgundian journey to King Etzel corresponded to those after 907 east of the Enns. Rüdiger was therefore regarded as a person of real existence who, under Magyar supremacy, ruled over a march in the western part of Lower Austria. Since a large proportion of the local nobility perished in the battle of Pressburg or had withdrawn to Bavaria, there were hardly any persons who could have formed the necessary structures for the existence of a march. The lack of sufficient leadership and population prevented the development of a march or margrave in Lower Austria during the Magyar period.[129] This is what the poet of the Nibelungenlied "must have seen when he dramatically processed the theme of the Germanic reckoners in Hunnish services."[130]

The fortress Sand, discovered at Raabs a few years ago and dendrochronologicaly dated to 926–929, provides one example that demonstrates that there were relatively self-sufficient local dominions in the largely uninhabited northern forest north of the Danube. In those areas, Slavic elites are archaeologically documented. The fortress Sand was ultimately destroyed by the Magyars despite its isolated location.[131] This suggests that they must have known about this remote ruling power and apparently did not tolerate it. Even the already

127 Brunner 1994, 59.
128 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch 1, 176.
129 Weltin 1990, 410–20.
130 Weltin 1990, 419f.
131 Felgenhauer-Schmiedt 2002, 381–396; Felgenhauer-Schmiedt 2008, 298–321.

mentioned seat in Gars am Kamp, also located in the eastern part of today's Waldviertel, existed until the middle of the tenth century. However, it might have also fallen victim to an attack of the Magyars. Nevertheless, there was an adjoining settlement of craftsmen that survived for several more decades.[132]

After the defeat of 907, the border regressed to the Enns. However, the part of today's Upper Austria that lies to the west of this river, remained part of the East Frankish Empire. The inner power structure of this area cannot be fully interpreted because the quality and quantity of sources remains insufficient. Even though it might be true that many of the legal transactions of the Salzburg Archbishop were documented from these decades, none of them specifically concerns the Donau area to the west of the Enns.[133] Furthermore, the Passau cartulary breaks off quite abruptly in 907.[134] Apparently, even these border areas were too dangerously exposed for the Bavarian bishops to conclude a legal transaction. The Magyars must have repeatedly crossed today's Upper Austria on their westward expeditions and at times, great battles took place there between the Bavarians and the Magyars. For example, in 943, the Bavarian Duke Berthold won against the Magyars at Wels.[135] Six years later, however, at Traun, victory was on the side of the Magyars.[136]

Most information has been stored about the border area "Traungau", which, as mentioned, has been a part of the "Ostland" until 907. After 907, Arbo eventually withdrew to the Traungau, as is evident from a document from the year 909. It still refers to Arbo as margrave and informs that King Louis the Child assigned him a monastery at the lake of Traun.[137] The formerly large march clearly continued to exist after 907, albeit in a greatly reduced form. Around 909, Arbo allegedly lost his life while hunting.[138] After his death, apparently no successor was appointed and the Traungau was integrated into the newly established duchy of Bavaria. A count in the Traungau is mentioned in 930[139]

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132 Summary in Obenaus 2014, 61ff., 88f.; Obenaus 2008, 196f., 211.

133 Salzburger Urkundenbuch I, 67ff.

134 See for Traditionen des Hochstiftes Passau.

135 Reindel 1953, 196–99, No 99; Continuatio Reginonis, MGH SS rer. Germ. 50, 163 ad 944: *Ungarii a Baiovariis et Carantanis in loco Weles* [...].

136 Annales sancti Stephani Frisingensis, MGH SS 13, 51 ad 950: *Multi Baiovariorum occisi sunt ab Ungariis ad Luo et Carentani ab Ungariis occisi sunt.*

137 DLK.67.

138 Ekkehard von Aura, 225 ad 1104: [...] *quem in venatu a visonte bestia confossum vulgares adhuc cantilenae resonant.*

139 Salzburger Urkundenbuch I, 99, No 37; Weltin 1983, 210; Zauner 1960, 217.

and the next one four decades later,[140] but there are no indications of a specific border protection in that time, despite the persisting threat of the Magyars.[141] Far less information is available regarding the the county structures in the rest of Upper Austria.

Until a few years ago it was assumed that immediately after the defeat at "Pressburg", Liutpold's son Arnulf took over the lead in Bavaria and became duke, a position which had been denied to his father. Recent research has cast doubt on this, and it seems likely that Arnulf did not follow his father seamlessly.[142] As military leader, Arnulf was not mentioned in sources until 913 when he defeated the Magyars. After this, no armed conflict between Bavaria and Magyars was reported for twelve years. This lull suggests that some form of armed truce must have been negotiated at that time permitting a reprieve from fighting and a sustained period of peace for for the inhabitants of the Austrian Donau Region.

In 916, Arnulf had already gained enough power that he could risk an uprising against King Konrad I of East Francia. From the descriptions of this event, it is clear that the Bavarian bishops did not support Arnulf but backed King Konrad I instead. This behaviour indicates that Arnulf was by no means completely accepted as a leading figure in all of Bavaria.[143] In fact, Arnulf appears to have established himself as duke in Bavaria only in 919 after the death of King Konrad; only then he was able to finally attain a royal position.[144]

After the death of Duke Arnulf in 937the energetic East Frankish King Otto I increasingly intervened in the inner affairs of Bavaria and in 947, he appointed his own brother Henry as duke. The dethroned Liutpoldinger dynasty, tried to resist this intervention, but they were soundly defeated in 955. In the same year the menacing Magyars once again threatened invasion. Otto I successfully opposed their military ambitions and led the forces of East Francia to a brilliant victory at Lechfeld. This event was an important prerequisite for the successful reintegration of territories from the east of the Enns into the realm of the empire.[145]

140 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 134, No 12d (977).
141 Deutinger 2008, 62f.
142 Deutinger 2008, 62ff.
143 Deutinger 2008, 63.
144 Deutinger 2002, 17–68.
145 Niederösterreichisches Urkundenbuch I, 196–201, No 16–16b.

CHAPTER 3

The Magyars and Their Contribution to the Collapse and Fall of Great Moravia: Allies, Neighbours, Enemies

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During[1] the past few years, partly in connection with new and unexpected archaeological discoveries related to the Great Moravian period,[2] there has been a renewed interest in the characteristic features of Great Moravia, in the broadest sense of the word, covering multiple intersecting problematic areas.[3]

One of these areas is the much debated issue of what caused the collapse of the polity of Great Moravia and specifying the possible influence the Magyar ethnic group had on the catastrophe. It is the role of the Magyars that we shall attempt to relate in this chapter, relying primarily on archaeological observations and sources. Although this subject has been addressed in some of our earlier works,[4] the proliferation of new data and finds enables us to offer a slightly modified view of the Magyar engagement, culminating in the so-called conquest of the land and permanent settlement in the Central European region.

1 The work has been written as part of research project No. 15–22658S of the Czech Grant Agency.

2 I mean particularly the recent excavations at Pohansko near Břeclav which were the impulse for this book, although we cannot leave unnoticed important results of research in the other centres of cardinal importance in the Lower Moravia basin, such as Mikulčice or the Staré Město – Uherské Hhradiště agglomeration as well as some sites in the more northerly parts of the land (Olomouc, Přerov, Chotěbuz-Podobora, Stěbořice and others); an independent chapter is the complex of fortifications in the Považský Inovec mountain range (Bojná I–III) in West Slovakia with a high information value.

3 Let us mention here at least the latest contribution to the debate by Macháček 2015, 464–494, summarising and responding to the ongoing discussion on Great Moravia that the article rekindled in a positive sense and which can get us further in its understanding (includes relevant works and their authors).

4 Kouřil 2003, 110–146; 2008, 113–135; 2014, 178–181.

 | DOI:10.1163/9789004392878_004

3.1 The Arrival of Magyar Nomads into Central Europe and the Gradual Disintegration of the Mojmirid Domain

The journey of the Magyars from their original homeland in the Urals (from Asian west Siberia), dotted with victories and defeats, was not straightforward or easy. On the European continent, in the Lower Volga region (in Bashkiria), they settled permanently for the first time during the 1st millennium BC in an area later called *Hungaria Magna*, where they were strongly influenced by their Turkic neighbours. Within this territory they led a nomadic life over a relatively long period until, as late as the mid-8th century, they moved westward to the area east of the Don; so-called Levedia (named after a duke called Levedi). There they became a loose component of the empire of the Turkic-speaking Khazars (Khazar Khaganate), which was a conglomerate of different ethnicities under Khazar dominance, including those using the Persian language; this again had a considerable impact both on their material culture and symbolism, and the wordstock, but most importantly on the model of governance and in a way the ethnic habitus. Together with the Khazars they managed to fend off raids by the Pechenegs attacking from the east, but around 850 they suffered a serious defeat which spurred them to migrate even further to the west. A small portion separated and travelled to the Caucasus where they were later assimilated by their neighbours.[5] Another possible reason for the move was the fact that at the same time, approximately in the 830s, they accepted and provided protection to the so-called Kabars (meaning rebels), who rebelled against the Khagan but were ultimately defeated. Their support of the rebels consequently brought the Magyars into conflict with the power and authority of the Khagan. The Kabars thus completed the seven Magyar tribes with whom they shared their fortunes before they definitively settled down.[6]

5 There is extensive literature on the subject; let us mention at least some selected works mainly by Hungarian authors: Györffy 1994, 78–79; Mesterházy 1994, 23–65; Kristó 1996; Fodor 1982; 1996, 13–18; 1998, 29–35; 2015; Róna-Tas 1999, particularly passages from p. 271; Kontler 2001, esp. 26n; Révész 2002, 129; Steinhübel 2004, 149–156; briefly Schulze-Dörrlamm 1991, 373–377.

6 The Kabars or Khavars, comprised of three main tribes (families) and other groups are mentioned here in more detail primarily due to the fact that within the Magyar tribal confederacy they formed a relatively homogenous entity, their material culture revealing more obvious Iranian and Turkic influences compared to the Magyars; it was some of the finds of this type or influenced by it that we can probably identify in Moravian material (?). It is assumed that they attained greater wealth and a higher position than the other tribes through military service and we expect that some of them also established themselves in the Nitra region. They managed to preserve their language for quite a long period, until the mid-10th century, in contrast to the other ethnicities allied with the Magyars, with whom they arrived to the Carpathian basin, and only then they assimilated with the majority population. Further

They found a new temporary home in the Atelkuz (Etelköz meaning between rivers), a zone between the Dnieper and the Dniester north of the Black Sea, not far from the Danube delta and in sight of the Carpathian range. From here they gradually, but consistently, tested their alternatives in the west, either independently through military troops or retinues acting on their own initiative, or following an invitation and in collaboration with the governing forces in East Central Europe (and the Carpathian basin), such as the contesting Moravian duchy (*regnum*) of the Mojmirids and the East Frankish Kingdom. If we can trust the usually objective *Annals of St. Bertin* (*Annales Bertiniani*), the Magyars are mentioned for the first time as a previously unknown enemy pillaging the kingdom as early as 862.[7] Almost two decades later, in 881, we are told of Magyar-Kabar troops laying waste to the environs of Vienna, very likely on the suggestion of the Moravian Svatopluk I (871–894).[8] In 892, the Magyar cavalry fought, unsuccessfully, in alliance with Arnulf against the Moravians. The archaeological record suggests that the Magyars may have by then already controlled the north-eastern part of the Carpathian Basin. A turning point came in the years 894–895. During that time the Magyars were engaged on two fronts and they formed an alliance with Svatopluk I against the Franks. The consequence of this alliance, recounted by the *Annals of Fulda* (*Annales fuldenses*), was on the one hand the cruel plundering of Pannonia, and on the other the subsequent peace between his successor Mojmir II (894–906) and the Bavarians.[9] The campaign likely allowed the Magyars to acquaint themselves with the land that would become their new homeland. This was mainly due to the fatal repercussions of their involvement in the conflict between the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI and the Bulgarian Tsar Simeon. As allies of the emperor, they were now at odds with their perennial enemies, the Pechenegs, whom the Bulgarians had won over to their side. The Pechenegs attacked the poorly protected Magyar settlements in Etelköz while the Magyar forces were still on the return march home, and killed most of the inhabitants, seized cattle and, more importantly the horses indispensable to the nomadic

details in Kouřil 2003, 144; Kristó 1996, esp. 149–158; Fodor 1996, 15; archaeological and historical details on the Khazars in Artamonov 2002, ibid a rather antiquated passage on the Hungarians and the Pechenegs, 340–355; most recent Zhivkov 2015, 127–146; Révész 1996, 503, rightfully points out the vagueness of archaeological sources in determining ethnic identity in the old Magyar environment, including Kabar elements or artefacts of Kabar provenance.

7 MMFH I, 73, there they could get acquainted for the first time with western military tactics.

8 Kristó 1996, 150 (with reference to the source MGH SS XXX/2, 742), assumes that the Kabars fought there together with the Magyars but not being an integral part of the Magyar tribal confederacy, they acted separately as independent units and most likely had a rather different territorial coverage in this campaign.

9 MMFH I, 123–124.

way of life. The devastating loss forced the Magyars to look for a new place to live.[10] As early as the autumn of 895 the Magyars crossed the Verecke Pass and in the following spring (896) they began to settle in great numbers in the Upper Tisza basin. This was the first stage of a deliberate plan to settle in a new homeland. To what extent this could have happened with the willing consent of the Moravians is a matter of speculation; it seems more likely that despite Magyar losses and their considerable weakening by the previous clashes, the Moravian duchy, evidently on the verge of an ill-managed crisis, had no choice. Regardless, from that moment on, the nomadic element became a permanent neighbour, or a rather "undesirable tenant," which shaped the course of history in the region and beyond.

In the beginning it looked like the Mojmirids could get along relatively well with the newly arriving neighbours, provided both sides respected each other. Indeed, until 900, the Magyars were faithful allies (federates) to the Moravian duke, fighting, probably even as part of the Moravian contingent, in anti-Bavarian campaigns. Instances of mutual interaction, co-operation and close collaboration are indicated by a few written sources and infrequent archaeological finds. For example, Bavarian bishops complained that the Moravians are accused of shaving their heads following the Magyar example, adopting the customs of the nomads and together with them endangering the Christian world.[11] In relation to the latter one could point out the eastern-style militaria found (albeit rarely) in the grave goods of individuals ritually buried (with piety) in some central locations situated in the core of the

10 It was particularly the female component of their population that was heavily decimated. As a result it is sometimes assumed that after crossing the Carpathians one of the first "tasks" of the new arrivals (comprised mostly of military parties) was to secure women (logically mostly from the Slavic environment) in order to maintain and reproduce progeny (Artamonov 2002, 351, further references ibid); it was probably from that moment that, particularly in the eastern part of the Mojmirid empire, there was the merging and close contacts of the elites on both sides, which could have later had (apart from other aspects) a negative impact at the times decisive for the land's destiny (this is naturally a hypothetical idea). In Hungarian archaeology and historiography the perennial and often debated issue (two theories) is whether the individual groups of the old Magyars had not settled in Pannonia even earlier than the generally accepted year 895, i.e. from the sixties, when we have the first written record about them (862), and in this connection attention is called to their possible contact and relationship with the allegedly surviving Avars on the one side, and on the other side (which seems much more probable) with the generally highly varied population of the Carpathian basin, i.e. the Slavs, remaining Avars (?) and other ethnicities. For further details see Révész 2013, 179–188.

11 MMFH III, especially 240–242. On the interpretation of this letter of complaint see Třeštík 1987, 53; details concerning the years 894–906/907 in Měřínský 581–621.

realm, whether it was Mikulčice[12] or Pohansko near Břeclav,[13] most likely at a time when Great Moravia was nearing its end. In this context we cannot rule out that Moravian warriors possibly participated in the campaigns to northern Italy (Lombardy), where in 899/900 the East Frankish ruler Arnulf directed the Magyars, his restless and unpredictable neighbours to the east,[14] against his foe, King Berengar.[15] Similar incursions were carried out together

12 Kouřil 2006, 69–77; 2008, 117–118; it is a relatively shallow, unusually oriented grave No. 786 in the vicinity of a palace building on the acropolis of the Mikulčice stronghold, which also contained a subtle throwing axe (*čakan*) with a hole for attaching the blade cover, leaf-shaped rhombic arrowheads and atypical fittings, pointing most likely to eastern origin or inspiration; while it is by no means a standard Magyar grave, the influence of the nomadic cultural milieu is obvious. The leaf-shaped tip registered in the pelvis area was also found in male grave No. 90 at the 6th Mikulčice church; the burial situated at the very edge of the necropolis is dated to the final phase of its existence. Further Profantová 2003, 57.

13 A warrior was also buried in the cemetery around Church No. 2 (a rotunda with an apse) at Pohansko (grave No. 105), where the grave goods included a typical Magyar axe – a so-called fokos (having a number of close analogies in the nomadic environment), as well as spurs (with a relatively long prick), which, however, the Magyars did not use in riding. Further Macháček 2014, 270; consequently, regarding its dating we may again take into consideration the very end of the 9th century or rather the first years (decades?) of the next century; the decisive factor will naturally be the overall evaluation of the relationship of this settlement complex, with the sacred and profane district (courtyard?), to the stronghold itself and its immediate hinterland. A fokos, a spur with three rivets in the cross-wise groove of the plates were part of the grave goods of an elite warrior interred in a grave (No. 76) with a stone lining in the cemetery of the stronghold of Gars-Thunau, which was very likely within the sphere of Great Moravian influence; the burial is dated to the end of the 9th century. Further Nowotny 2013, 444–445; in the above cases it is not evidence of the presence of the nomads themselves, but a manifestation of a more general impact of Euro-Asian military fashion, or possible the spoils of war. For the sake of completeness let us mention Magyar bronze heart-shaped belt fittings (quite unique in the Moravian environment) uncovered in the terrace between Břeclav and Lanžhot, just as a bronze (bag) strap end decorated with the motif of the tree of life and a bronze hollow pendant (button) with an eye from the Na včelách location close to the north-eastern suburb of Pohansko, testifying to the mutual contacts and in the above cases even direct participation of Magyars in the local life (comp. Note 59). Further Dresler, Macháček, Měchura, 2015, 60; also Dresler 2016, 168–169.

14 This was Arnulf's response to the Magyar plundering of Pannonia between 896–898, in which Moravians probably participated; Třeštík 1987, 34 based on the wording of a letter by Bavarian bishops thought that his intention was their definitive departure and permanent settlement in the west by which he would get rid of an unwanted neighbour and simultaneously damage his Italian rival; a detailed analysis and interpretation of this document Měřínský 2013, 599n.

15 An Italian campaign could be supported by three silver, so-called wide North-Italian deniers minted in Milan (frequently occurring in Magyar cemeteries in the Carpathian basin), of which two, perforated by two opposite holes, belong to Emperor Lambert

(?) with the Magyars even earlier (898), and also later (901, 904–905).[16] In this tumultuous environment, alliances were constantly shifting; one's friend could quickly become an enemy and one's adversary could suddenly become an ally.

The period after the return of the Magyar troops from the Italian campaign was marked as a time of confusion with the sudden death of Arnulf. When his successor, Louis the Child, was unable to honour previous pledges Magyar chiefs concluded peace with Berengar and restored order. Although the Magyar horsemen ravaged Pannonia, the status quo with the Moravians was probably maintained, as suggested by two common campaigns against the Bavarians in the autumn months of 900; however, a warning sign was the fact that the groups withdrawing from Lombardy did not return to the occupied territory between the Tisza and the Danube, but remained in Pannonia and gained control even over today's Austrian Danube region as far as the Enns. Soon after these events there was a general cooling in the Moravian-Magyar relationship. Both "original residents" in the Central European region, Bavarians and Moravians, slowly came to realise that the ever-stronger nomadic element was growing into a dangerous competitor, posing a threat to their own independence.[17] The conclusion of peace between Mojmir II and the king of East Frankish Empire Louis in 900 allowed them to forgo mutual animosities and

(894–898), and the third (without holes) to King Berengar (888–915, emperor 915–924); the coins were uncovered north of the atrium of the three-nave basilica in Mikulčice ca 70 cm deep, their perforation is quite clear evidence of the Magyar custom to attach or sow them onto the clothing, saddle cover or horse's bridle; further Kouřil 2003, 112–114. But to consider them grave finds might be questionable (?), as they are said to have been unearthed from a layer above the graves and may never have been part of grave fill, as was most recently inferred, based on the analysis of the vague find context, by Mazuch 2012, 150; although they admit (with a question mark) the possible presence of Magyar warriors in the Mikulčice stronghold even before the final collapse of Great Moravia, although there are other, equally valid interpretations available; however, the location, stratigraphic conditions and terrain configuration are not supportive of the alternative that they might have reached the place later in connection with the conquest of Mikulčice. An overview of the Magyar incursions in Italy Capitani 1998, 21–27.

16 Třeštík 1987, 33–34; Měřínský 2013, 593.

17 This period probably saw another and most likely the final transfer of Magyar groups and clans from behind the Carpathians which complemented and reinforced the nomadic element; in this connection Hungarian literature speaks of three main phases of the land conquest: first 895–898, second 899–900 and third 900–902; Róna-Tas 1999, 330–338, in particular 334; Fodor 1996, 18, assumes that around the year 900 the conquest of the new homeland had been virtually completed. It is estimated that approximately 100,000–400,000 Magyars arrived in the Carpathian basin, where the higher number is thought more probable, Kontler 2001, 36; for the territory of the present day Slovakia it is counted with ca 120,000 mostly Slav inhabitants for the last quarter of the 9th century, Ruttkay 1988, 134.

Moravia could take a deep breath prior to the consolidation process. All the more so as the fratricidal struggles within Moravia where the winner was in the end Mojmir II came to an end. The consequence of the previous permanent and concentrated military-political pressure by the East Frankish Empire, coupled with internal strife and exhaustion brought about by the previous invasions, Svatopluk's vast but heterogeneous former domain suffered extensive territorial losses; Bohemia fell away in 895, followed by Sorbia around 897 and the Balaton Principality in Pannonia. The loss of vast territories and the diminished access to indispensable commodities undoubtedly led to the impoverishment of the key agglomerations including their hinterland, and maybe even to "excessive pressure" concerning human potential, when it cannot be ruled out that groups (mainly consisting of warriors) leaving the lost territories could have withdrawn there.[18] The overall unstable situation was likely reflected in a decreasing level of economic development and, in part, at least, in an interruption of the long-distance trade. The latter may have spelled doom for the local elites, which in turn influenced their own position and relationship with the ruler.[19]

These events are also mirrored in archaeological sources. In clusters of graves we observe a general paring down of grave goods, both in terms of quantity and quality; objects from precious metals are replaced by less noble material, the diminished level of technology and workmanship is obvious.[20] We also register non-standard placement of grave goods while the burials are frequently very shallow and not uniformly oriented and we miss the laying of the dead in coffins or in wood encasing, etc. All are indications of pauperised society that buried its dead at a time of instability. Some of the sacred buildings (Mikulčice and Pohansko), which may have arisen within this time span (?), are untraditional buildings of much simpler plan and interior furnishings.[21]

Regardless of how Mojmir's position had been weakened he proved that he was able to lead by bringing a modicum of stability to the land. As early as 900 his efforts towards the renewal of the Moravian ecclesiastical province, in accordance with the wishes and favour of the Holy See, resulted in the problem-free re-establishment of the archbishopric and appointments to the existing (Nitra) or newly established Episcopal Sees (four dioceses); legates of Pope

18 Kouřil, Tymonová 2013, 158.

19 Wihoda 2010, 93–94.

20 A typical feature is, for example, various lead artefacts (especially embellishments), among them buttons with a high suspension eye, also identified in the necropolis at the 2nd church at Pohansko, further Macháček 2014, 271–272; Kouřil 2008, 71–72.

21 Kouřil 2010, 57–69; Macháček, Balcárková, Čáp, Dresler, Přichystal, Přichystalová, Schuplerová, Sládek 2014, 87–153.

John IX, despite protests by Bavarian clerics, installed an archbishop and three bishops there.[22] The action was clearly well thought out, taking into account diplomatic concerns and being financially well supported. Such an act would be impossible without a functional administrative and repressive apparatus, suggesting a certain calming down in Moravian circumstances and perhaps not just in ecclesiastical matters. After all, this is also evidenced by the so-called *Raffelstetten Tariffs* (about 904–905),[23] revealing that Moravia was still counted on as a relatively reliable trading partner;[24] at that time the Moravian ruler also actively intervened in matters in the Bavarian Eastern March. Nevertheless, this apparently favourable turn was short-lived. Before accommodation with the rapidly changing circumstances could be reached, the conquering drive by the newcomers prevailed. While in 902 Moravian units repelled the Magyar attack, that was for the last time. The immediate pretext for direct military confrontation with the Moravian-Bavarian bloc was the murder of Kusal, one of the highest ranking Magyar chiefs, and of his entourage during negotiations at the Bavarian court in 904. The first victim of the ensuing attack of the Magyars was quite understandably the Mojmirid domain, which had already been weakened by structural crisis. We do not know exactly how Great Moravia was finally crushed. It may have been a single decisive battle sometime in 905 or 906, perhaps in the surroundings of Nitra (?), as some historians assume on the basis of later sources.[25] One should not ignore the alternative possibility that the shattered and disintegrated Moravian duchy was subjugated gradually without any decisive confrontation taking place. Miroslav Lysý's argument that[26] "the fall of the power structures (understand Great Moravia) at the beginning of the 10th century was not an unavoidable consequence of chronic instability, but rather an unlucky coincidence: while Moravia was in a state of weakness after the death of Svatopluk (894) an unanticipated severe attack came from the Magyars (about 906)",[27] is, according to our assessment, rather problematic

22 Jan 2011, 113–114; Měřínský 2013, 339–340; Vavřínek 2013, 312–314.

23 The origin of the Raffelstetten Tariffs is sometimes dated more broadly between 902/903–907, Zehetmayer 2007, 28.

24 MMFH IV, 114–119.

25 Třeštík 1987, 36–37; 1991, 20; the outcome of the Moravian-Magyar conflict was substantial liquidation of the decisive military units, in particular the elite duke's entourage, top echelons of the aristocracy and probably the ruler himself; critical evaluation Štefan 2011, 345.

26 Lysý 2014, 122.

27 Hungarian specialised literature (historical and archaeological) consistently and in unison, obviously under the influence of works by Györffy (see Note 5), quite illogically considers the year 902 to be the last year of the existence of Great Moravia, which was clearly rejected, for example, by Třeštík in his studies (Note 24); as well as Steinhübel 2012, 77,

and may not fully reflect the real situation of the Mojmirid domain. The evidence indicates that the "unanticipated" strike indeed crippled Moravia, but it could have been anticipated and was quite logical in its own way.

3.2 The Moravian Elites at the End of the 9th and the Beginning of the 10th Century and Their Share in the Crisis of Statehood

After the death of Duke Svatopluk (894) his first-born son Mojmir II assumed power. However, Mojmir's path to the ducal throne and protecting his position was anything but simple. His route was blocked by the ambitions of his younger brother, Svatopluk II, who was supported by a section of Moravian nobility and the East Frankish Empire. The five-year-long struggle for succession and a number of other internal and external interlinked problems imperilled the Mojmirid possessions undergoing complicated development in this period. The intra-dynastic conflict operated most likely as a catalyser of the collapse of early medieval Moravia as a polity.[28]

Let us take a brief look at the situation at the top of Moravian society. While the father of the two brothers, Duke Svatopluk, was still capable of keeping the old family (tribal) aristocracy at its due "distance", he probably failed to completely marginalise it and after his death the situation changed. It was the tribal dukes, the *principes*, as well as other *primates, optimates* or *nobiles viri*, who could have taken advantage of the new situation and asked for a greater share in power.[29] The rivalry of the two brothers offered a good opportunity for just that, for we know that each Mojmirid had his own retinue, his own "people". Svatopluk II may even have had his own sovereign territory, most likely the Nitra region. Scholars have pointed out that despite information about the ousting of Pribina and his men from Nitra, no information exists that the Mojmirids eliminated rival families as the ruling families later did in Bohemia and Poland.[30] If true, then that could easily explain the fragmentation of power in the early 10th century,[31] as well as the competition of elites

who puts its definitive disintegration to the period delimited by the Saxon-Glomacz war in the spring of 906 and the incursion of Magyars in Saxonia in June of the same year.

28 Kalhous 2014, 179–180.

29 Wihoda 2010, 91–92; Galuška 2014, 54–65.

30 Třeštík 1997, 286–296.

31 The potential power dualism and eventual organisational duplicity could have had earlier roots based on the premise that the eastern part of Great Moravia, the so-called Nitra region, had been, prior to the accession (unification with Moravia), inhabited by a different "gens" or tribe than the Moravians proper; the local population and its elites (comp. the

and the increase in power of the individual magnates and their retinues. An important role could also have been that of the high clergy. Associated with this phenomenon may have been the dissolution of the large retinue of the ruler, the only guarantee of permanent expansion against neighbours and of a regular collection of tribute, which must have been the main support, at least in the initial phase, for the operation and development of the Mojmirid state.[32]

The possible existence of a dual system and the personal interests of Moravian and Nitra elites (in the eastern outreaches of the domain possibly more closely tied with the top echelons of the Magyars?),[33] economic

story of Pribina, who with high probability was not a member of the Mojmirid dynasty and was never described *verbis expressis* as the Nitra duke), had obviously not managed to successfully re-shape themselves as "fully-fledged Moravians" within a relatively short period; more inspiring thoughts on this, including an analysis of previous opinions, most recently Lysý 2014, 82–107; 2015, especially pp. 93–94. From an archaeological point of view we may in this respect point out the state of material culture (and beyond) in the Nitra region, which is qualitatively considerably different from Moravia proper; this can be clearly derived from the analysis of Slovak Great Moravian cemeteries, which (with a few exceptions) in terms of their grave foods, frequency and extent cannot compare with contemporary necropolises, particularly in the core of the realm, in the Morava basin, full of top-quality and precious artefacts (jewellery, heavy weapons, belt fittings, etc.); as a rule (perhaps except for Ducové) we also miss there cemeteries adjoining churches; this is surprising particularly in Nitra itself and its hinterland, although it needs to be admitted that later long-term settlement and dense construction development significantly damaged some early medieval sites, further Hanuliak 2004. Evidence of Christianity, particularly east of the Váh river, is not very conspicuous in the Nitra region, further Hanuliak, Pieta 2014,138–151; also Kouřil 2014, 113.

32 Třeštík 1987, 40; it can be assumed that the departure of Svatopluk II and his supporters (understand retinue) into "exile" weakened the battle readiness of the Moravian military forces.

33 A closer collaboration of the top echelons of both ethnicities and a smooth transition of important Slovak families into the structures of the emerging Hungarian state could be supported, for example, by the case of the Hont-Poznan family which successfully established itself in this way including with its extensive land possessions, which had very likely been acquired even before the Hungarian monarchy constituted itself, at the time of the existence of Great Moravia, further Lukačka 2010, 1–13; also Steinhübel 2012, 114–116. Czech specialised literature tends to adopt a rather a reserved or even sceptical approach to private land ownership in Great Moravia, further Charvát 1987,672–679 (including references to older literature); also Klápště 2009, 536–538; the situation could have been and probably was different in Pannonia, not to mention the Eastern March, which found themselves under strong Frankish influence. Archaeological observations make it quite clear that in particular Nitra and its immediate environs did not face any significant catastrophe at the beginning of the 10th century which would testify to a fatal clash with Magyars, regress of settlement is not observable, quite the contrary, further Fusek 2008, 295–304; also Štefanovičová 2008, especially 144; Ruttkay 2012, especially 134–138; Bednár 2014, 243–248; Botek 2014, 96–97. The more or less peaceful co-existence

exhaustion of the land and a low ability to exploit and mobilise internal resources, eventual demographic regress, territorial loses and a probably related gradual shortage of quality professional warriors (we do not know how large the "catchment area" from where they were recruited at that time was),[34] all of that were the moments which on the scales outweighed the endeavour of the centre (the ruler and his inner circle) to revitalise the circumstances. The result was the definitive collapse of Great Moravia without hope of resuscitation, sealed by the futile effort of the Bavarians to re-establish the order in Pannonia and around the central Danube, and culminated in their total defeat in 907 at the Battle of Pressburg and the decimation of the cream of the Bavarian aristocracy.[35] Moravian units are no longer mentioned in this context as participating in the bloody battle (*bellum pessimum*), although the idea that the retinue of Svatopluk II might have been deployed as part of the Bavarian contingents cannot be completely refuted. Hypothetically, Slavic units, especially from the eastern regions could have participated on the side of the Magyars.[36] The political and military elites thus failed to fulfil – due to objective as well as subjective reasons – their "historical mission"; they did not succeed in building

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of the local inhabitants with new arrivals and their mutual influencing each other and acculturation are admitted even by some new Hungarian archaeological works; further Langó, Patay-Horváth 2015, 367–380. There are also deliberations that the autochthonous (i.e. Slav-Moravian) aristocracy could have been relied upon by the first members of the Árpád dynasty in pushing through the Christian ideology of the Latin form and the reign under a single ruler (Ruttkay 2013, 43–44).

34 Ruttkay 2002, 112–113 assumes that with the estimated number of inhabitants of the core of Great Moravia of 300,000–350,000, at the time when it reached its peak it was possible to mobilise a maximum of 20,000–30,000 of foot warriors, the number of horsemen should have varied between 3,000–5,000.

35 Most recently on the reconstruction model of the battle Torma 2008, 169–193.

36 This assumed co-operation would have had to run on a voluntary basis and in this context it might, very reservedly, be admitted that a certain moving agent could have been the fact that the pagan Magyars were seen as a support by the part of Slavic population which was not enthusiastic about the principles of the Christian dogma inflicted upon them; let us point out that archaeological evidence of religiousness in this area is essentially insignificant. Havlík 1991, 15 maintains that missing mentions of Moravians in connection with the Battle of Pressburg need not mean or are not evidence of the fact that Moravia as a polity ceased to exist, when the confrontation is considered to be an exclusive matter of the two protagonists – the Bavarians striving to re-capture lost territory and the Magyars defending their conquered land; the Moravians had no reason to become engaged in this conflict on either side. It might be objected that Svatopluk II as a member of the hereditary dynasty with his faithful retainers and his Bavarian allies could have an eminent interest, after the death of his brother, in regaining the lost positions and subjugated Moravia as his rightful patrimony and participated in the clash in some way (see further in the text by Martin Wihoda in this book).

a stabilised polity, regardless of what name we apply. The naked truth of the fragile nature of the Mojmirid empire, devoid of firm political and ecclesiastical foundations to support it, is revealed.[37] Nevertheless, the fall of Moravia and the Bavarian fiasco was just an overture, a prelude to the bloody events caused by the Magyars which awaited Europe in the following decades.

3.3 The Bow and the Sabre or "Save us from the Magyar Arrows, Oh God"

The specific material culture of the Magyars, particularly weapons and equestrian equipment alien to the Central and West European environment, represents an unmistakeable and easily distinguishable chronologically sensitive element. Magyar military tactics, steeped in hundreds of years of nomadic tradition and perfected on the Euro-Asian steppes for centuries, proved to be a very efficient and essentially insurmountable hurdle in the efforts of the western armies to defeat and pacify the invaders from the east.[38] The masterful command of the reflex bow, lined with bone and having arrows with flat leaf-shaped iron arrowheads of various forms with a stem, was feared by the enemies of the Magyars and innocent inhabitants alike. This great terror is attested to by an Italian prayer originated around 900 and cited in the heading above.[39] On Moravian sites that are believed to have been destroyed by Magyar attacks, arrowheads are indeed the most frequent find among militaria. The absolute majority of these artefacts, which are atypical for the Central and West European milieu, have identical parallels in the old Magyar cemeteries in the Carpathian Basin and on a scale that is never observed again within the examined territory. The conclusion is therefore that, since such artefacts are typically found outside fortified sites nad only rarely in graves,[40] they must be related to the Magyars.[41]

Several sites in Slovakia, however, produced no evidence of a violent end of occupation, which could theoretically be attributed to the Magyars, which cannot be just a matter of the state of research. An exception in this respect is represented by the Bojná I stronghold where dozens of rhombic and deltoid

37 Wolfram 2014, 159.

38 Bóna 2002, 81–84; Mesterházy 2008, 169–175.

39 Makk 2002, 81 contemporary sources often describe them as cannibals maintaining pagan practises, etc.; further Diesenberger 2008, 344.

40 Kouřil, P. 2003, 137–138, Note 10.

41 Compared to local typical arrowheads with wings and a socket (sometimes with a twisted neck) clearly dominate; the same applies to South, Central and West Europe according to Schulze-Dörrlamm 2002, 129; also Pollak 2004, 661–693.

arrowheads that clearly exceed other types in this group of weapons are dispersed throughout the area; nevertheless, to put them in connection with any particular activities and events is premature at this time and we need to wait for further evaluation of the local context.[42]

The situation at some of the central locations in the core of Great Moravia, and in the lower Morava basin in particular, is quite different; this primarily concerns Mikulčice, Staré Město-Uherské Hradiště and Pohansko near Břeclav. Let us look first at Mikulčice, which we consider the key central point of the whole Mojmirid domain. We have claimed many times, supported by new evaluations of older and recently made excavations, that the dramatic downfall of the Mikulčice centre was absolute. The set of metallic artefacts related to the nomadic (Magyar) circle is quite eloquent in this way and represents so far the largest collection of finds of its kind both in the Czech lands and Slovakia (in fortified locations). If we disregard the above-mentioned artefacts from locations with clusters of graves, our attention is mainly attracted by the tips of arrows for the reflex bow, which presently amount to roughly 80 items and are concentrated especially in the central area – and particularly at both of the fiercely defended entrance corridors (including the deployment of mill stones), as well as ecclesiastical buildings and palaces with stone walls which provided a last resort for the defenders and vague chance of saving their lives (Fig. 3.1).[43] Among the other finds from the category of militaria it is necessary to highlight the iron, slightly arched crossguard of a sabre without the central pyramidal projection (Fig. 3.2 : 7); a typical nomadic weapon, familiar from the oldest Magyar graves in the central part of the Carpathian basin (mostly the upper Tisza region).[44] Origins in the eastern environment might be theoretically sought in bits (horse tackle) with narrowed sidepieces, with fragmented evidence of four units within the acropolis area, and a complete unit found as part of a hoard from the beginning of the 10th century in the

42 I would like to kindly thank the head of excavation Karol Pieta for the information. Further Pieta 2013, 423–437. It should be noted that research carried out so far in the Gars-Thunau stronghold in Lower Austria yielded almost four dozen arrowheads of this type, further Kouřil 2003, 141, Note 66.

43 The absolute majority comes from layers, from a depth of 10–60/70 cm, only rarely deeper, roughly 10 items were to have been unearthed in features; however, they are missing in the suburb, which had probably not been defended, a part could have been removed by recent activity (see Note 48). Under the bridge structures we observe a higher concentration of axes buried in the river bed, which might be related to their defence against the enemy at this time. Further Kouřil 2003, 138, Note 12; on the typology and chronology of early medieval arrowheads from the territory of Slovakia most recently and briefly Holeščák 2015, 299–306.

44 Ruttkay 1976, 287–288; Kovács 1980/1981, 247.

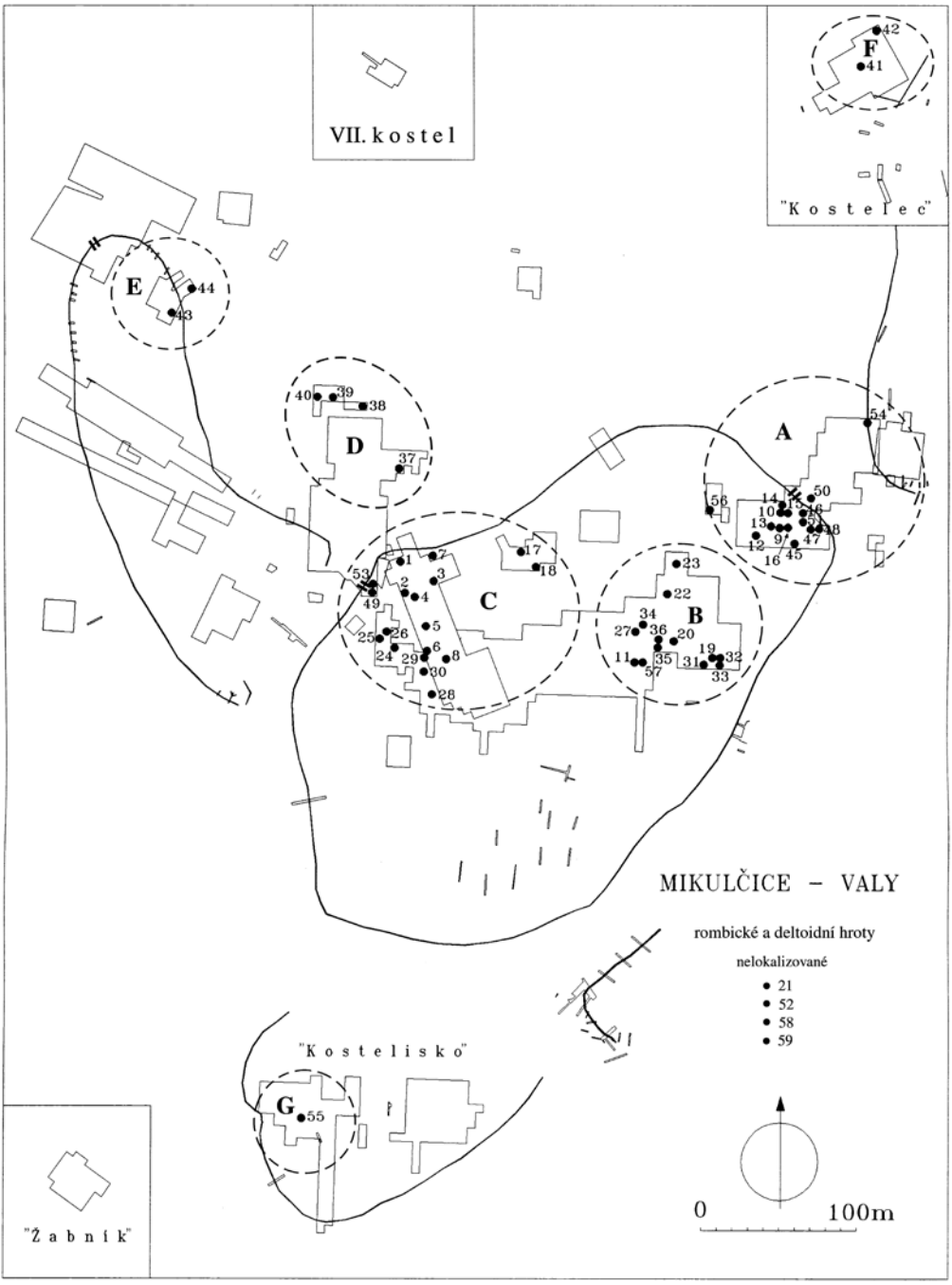

FIGURE 3.1 Mikulčice-Valy: dislocation of iron rhombic arrowheads of a composite bow
DRAWING: R. SKOPAL

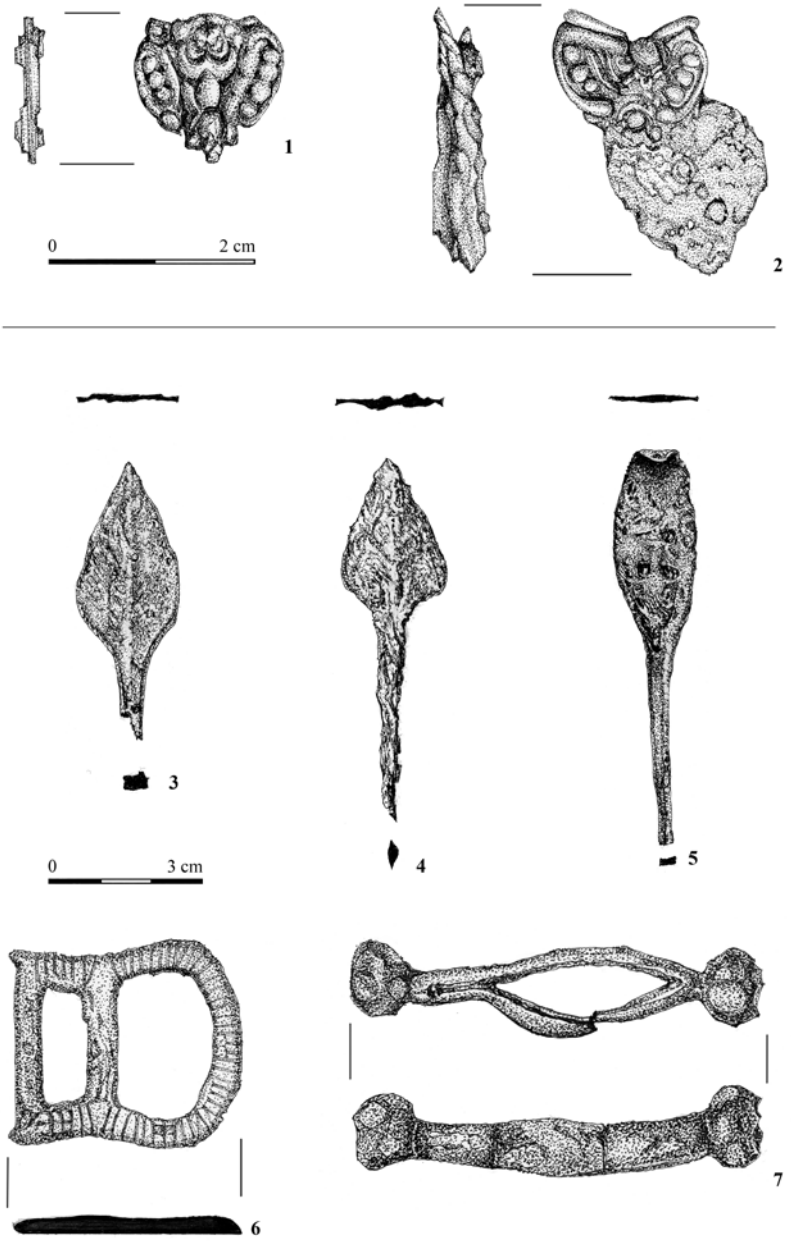

FIGURE 3.2 Mikulčice: bronze metal fitting (1–2), iron silver-inlaid buckle (6), iron cross-guard of a sabre (7); Staré Město: iron leaf-shaped arrowheads of a bow (3–4); Horní Kotvice: iron leaf-shaped arrowhead of a bow from grave No. 167 (5)
DRAWING: J. GRIEBLEROVÁ

presbytery of the 8th church.[45] With certain relevance, the Magyars could also have been in possession of an iron buckle decorated with silver-lined notches (Fig. 3.2 : 6); while attempts at more precise analogies have failed, this decoration technique was not alien to them, we can point out inlays of this type adorning stirrups, bits and oval buckles or crossguards of sabres, although often made in bronze.[46] We are on more secure ground in the case of small, heart-shaped belt mounts cast in bronze with palmetto (half-palmetto) decoration and typical circular swellings around the perimeter, fitted with small rivets with which they were fixed to a leather support (Fig. 3.2 : 1–2);[47] these applications could have been employed as decoration of horse bridles, a warrior's belt, a leather strap to a bag, a quiver or a case for a bow. These objects represent the sum of all currently known evidence for the presence of the Magyars in Mikulčice stronghold.[48]

Let us describe in greater detail the situation in the terrain and how it indicates the destruction of the fortification. This refers in particular to convincing evidence of widespread fire damage inside the stronghold, including a razed rampart that was not renewed;[49] most recently, in connection with re-examinations of sacred buildings, attention was drawn to the caving in of their charred ceiling and roof constructions, as well as the completely burnt load-bearing components of the corpus of the perimeter rampart.[50] Another

45 More detailed information Kouřil 2008, 119–120 (including other Moravian examples).

46 Fodor ed. 1996; Fodor, Révész, Wolf, Nepper, Marin eds., 1998, 82, 92, 102, 145; unlike its previous evaluation, in the case of this buckle we rather tend towards its nomadic origin (?); further Kouřil 2003, 120; also Nevizánszky 1999, 128–129. From Bohemia we can point out a stirrup with silver inlays from Dobruška-Běstviny (?) as well as undecorated examples from Kolín, Zbečno and Plešivec; further Profantová 2008, 153, 159–160; 2012, 295–307; Košnar 2006, 39–43. Surprisingly, no such finds have so far been known from Moravia and Silesia.

47 These small fittings (Cu 62 %, Sn 26 %, Pb 8 %) allegedly including the remains of a leather strap were uncovered on the acropolis of the Mikulčice stronghold in 1969, ca 50 cm deep, in a grey clay-sand layer; more detailed documentation is unfortunately missing. Their pendants are usual mainly in male graves in a number of Magyar necropolises; further Budinský-Krička, Fettich 1973, 174–175; Révész 1996, 271, 289, 295, 325; 1994, 321; Mesterházy 2013, 447–456; most recently an overview Bollók 2015, 225n, 584–585.

48 It is very likely that particularly in a part of the suburb the objects from the destruction horizon were removed together with the physical removal of the upper layers; in a way this also applies to the acropolis proper, damaged by fairly intensive agricultural activity; further Kouřil 2003, 114, 138, Note 12. We leave aside the whorl-shaped antler decorated by concentric rings having analogies in the eastern nomadic circle, buried in grave No. 15 at the 6th church, but unrelated to the final phase of settlement; further Profantová 2003, 86, 113.

49 Kouřil 2008, 120–121; also Poláček 2008, 289–290.

50 Mazuch, Dresler in print; I would like to sincerely thank both authors for permitting me to use quotations from this text.

significant factor are the hastily and non-pietally interred burials without grave pits observed on the acropolis and in the suburbs, both in the built-up areas and under the destroyed fortification on its external and internal side. It is estimated that up to 200 individuals are located under the collapsed rampart and in the case of the northern suburb (so far 22 skeletons) ca 400 dead. Surprisingly out of the 30 skeletons under the rampart "laid" (dropped) in this way, almost a half are the skeletons of children. Naturally, this raises several questions pertaining to the age, sex and social composition of the defenders or those escaping (?), their possible wounds, etc. It cannot, therefore, be a priori ruled out that there was indeed no one left to defend Mikulčice with full force, i.e., that the regular troops and garrisons were already either significantly weakened or completely eradicated by the Magyars.[51] If we accept that Mikulčice was really destroyed by a Magyar attack (which in our opinion is very likely based on the present state of knowledge), there must have been someone on the other side who organised the defence and who found it worthwhile to defend the centre of a domain on the verge of collapse; someone who was still able and willing, undoubtedly in his own interest and probably even in the interest of the dynasty, to put up resistance. We do not know whether perhaps some of the families of prominent Moravian lords loyal to the Mojmirids were assembled there with their private property and maybe even some "less important" members or relatives of the ruling dynasty could have spearheaded the defence, although we are well aware that these deliberations are of a speculative nature; apart from ambition and the need to eliminate the main centre of power, the aggressor might have been attracted by the anticipated spoils, whether in the form of church furnishings, or possibly the ruler's treasure, etc.[52] In Mikulčice we do not register evidence of any activities aimed at the removing of the traces of the previous disaster (repairs to destroyed buildings or ramparts), the few post-Great Moravian contexts and artefacts datable to the 10th, and/or 11th century (and earlier) are relatively insignificant in comparison

51 More on this in greater detail and with good argumentation Mazuch, Dresler in print; the necessity of carrying out anthropological analyses seems all-important, as was also pointed out Štefan 2014, 165, Note 34. A number of incisions on the skeleton, including the skull, probably caused by a sabre, were identified, for example, in a buried corpse in the interior of the church at the famous Gars-Thunau stronghold in Lower Austria, see Szameit 1995, 278, 281; it is assumed that site was also "pacified" by the Magyars, as it yielded, as mentioned above, almost four dozen rhombic and deltoid arrowheads; further Kouřil 2003, 126, 141.

52 This "royal" treasure is actually mentioned as of 870 in the *Annals of Fulda* (*MMFH* I, 205); also Hardt 2004, 46.

with the original importance of the site. The definitive loss of the agglomeration's position of power and its total devastation are more than obvious there.

A slightly different situation, is visible in nearby Pohansko near Břeclav. The destruction horizon is not clearly distinguished and if we take into consideration the recent excavations in the north-eastern suburb, which indicate possible survival of the local settlement well into the 10th century, the site need not have been hit so severely by catastrophe compared to the neighbouring Mikulčice. But nothing can be said about the collapse from the archaeological evidence of a rampart destroyed by fire; the features over which it was initially built; and the only known skeleton with traces of fire, which was found underneath the destroyed rampart. However, in the context of the overall situation at that time, its accidental burning or intentional setting on fire by the defenders leading to the destruction of the fortification is not likely, although theoretically such an alternative is possible. The infrequent evidence of destruction cannot be associated with the attacks of the nomadic warriors, and arrowheads with forms so typical for them have been found predominantly in the top layers together with "local" arrowheads, which eliminates the idea of such arrowheads being a marker of the presence of the Magyars.[53] Settlement regression is not as apparent here as in the neighbouring Mikulčice, for in Pohansko the settlement continued to be occupied, as indicated by the evidence of pagan reaction (or renaissance?) in the form of features in the north-east section of the originally fortified precinct and in the area of the cremation

53 Mazuch, Dresler in print; Kouřil 2003, 122–124; from Pohansko about a dozen of these arrowheads have so far been published, which are concentrated mainly in the vicinity of the Magnate Court, whereby we do not know the exact number of the newly unearthed items (J. Macháček this book); they include types which are very rare in Moravian sites – with a forked cutting edge (for example Těšov and Mikulčice, perhaps also used for hunting) or a specific deltoid shape; further Dostál 1966, 184; 1981, 82; in general, in Moravia we completely lack the specially shaped arrowheads with which the Magyars set the building on fire. Theoretically, it cannot be completely refuted that some of the dispersed, variously oriented and very shallow graves or those without an identifiable grave pit and with an absence of any finds in the area of a cremation cemetery (especially No. 28–32) and perhaps also selected burials from the area of the Forest Nursery and the north-eastern suburb (with a low representation of dead males) of a similar nature, could have been connected with the conquest of the stronghold or (more probably) could have belonged to the period of time after the loss of its original function; this would be supported by the composition of the relatively late, rather poor grave goods in some of the burials (65 percent of graves without gifts); further Dostál 1982, 135–201. In this respect, the situation in the south-western suburb is not quite clear; a number of mainly shallow graves were destroyed by modern landscaping; further Vignatiová 1977–1978, 135–154; 1979, 95–108.

cemetery.[54] However even here the site was gradually abandoned although, remains of relatively later features with pottery from the 10th/11th century were detected on the ruins of the church building.[55]

What were then the causes of the decline? If we disregard or relativize an explanation based on violent Magyar action, we are left with few alternative options. We have indicated above that the destruction of the fortification system by an unforeseeable act or by the inhabitants (defenders?) themselves does not seem feasible and spontaneous ignition by the forces of nature exactly at this critical moment would be an astonishing coincidence. The possibility that the defenders set it on fire intentionally, either prior to a voluntary or forced departure or acting on orders from conquerors following the "collaboration" of the local elites, is in our opinion equally possible, although the latter alternative is undoubtedly more likely considering human nature.[56] We cannot completely eliminate the chance that the stronghold was destroyed during the so-called "second wave" of the assumed Magyar onslaught after the end of the Bohemian-Moravian-Magyar alliance (920) in 921, when the Nitra region was to have been finally conquered and Moravia and Bohemia consequently plundered.[57] Again, this is only one hypothetical possibility, although some of the graves in the cemetery at the 2nd church likely exhibit material compatible with this dating.

And so we come full circle to the question of whether a direct attack was responsible for the fall of the neighbouring Mikulčice stronghold. If Pohansko really was an important emporium in its time, its ramparts would have protected tantalizing wealth which undoubtedly attracted pillaging hordes. While the excavations of the fortification wall carried out so far have not provided a clear answer to its destruction (apart from an assurance regarding its burning),[58] we cannot rule out that further excavation in its most exposed sections may offer an alternative portrait of events that differs from the current state of

54 The question arises in this context as to what the potential co-existence (if any) of the two districts – pagan (?) in the vicinity of the court and the cremation cemetery and Christian concentrated around the second church, with a find of a lead cross on the neck of the buried woman, was like; further Dostál 1968, 3–25; 1978, 145; Macháček, Pleterski 2000, 13–14; Macháček 2014, 186.

55 Dostál 1968, 20; Měřínský 1986, 34.

56 Along these lines Mazuch, Dresler in print; as we indicated in Note 13, the evaluation of the length of the burial period and the duration of settlement around the 2nd church in the north-eastern suburb will be of essential importance here.

57 Steinhübel 2012, 87–88; this is also the assumed date of the death of the Bohemian duke Vratislaus I, who is said to have died at a relatively young age in a clash with Magyars; further Wihoda 2006, 54–55.

58 Dresler 2011; Mazuch, Dresler in print.

knowledge. One way or another, for the time being we are not clear whether all of the outlined options, naturally with varying relevance, remain more or less open.[59] The exceptional location of the site and its tradition must have something to do with the fact that during the second half of the tenth century a completely new settlemen emerged in its hinterland, this time on the edge of the flood plain. In the 10th, as well as in the 9th century, the settlement in Pohansko was associated with long-distance trade.[60]

The vast and difficult to defend agglomeration of Staré Město – Uherské Hradiště, with its long sections of ramparts, has not yielded convincing evidence of its violent destruction despite many years of archaeological endeavours. The only exception, is the church precinct on the elevation at Sady, which may exhibit traces of fires, but may not be a reflection of these events, although there are reports of ransacked vaults and graves. It is likely that the settlement area as a whole was not completely afflicted by warfare at the turn of the 9th and the 10th century, when we lack destruction contexts including burnt-down buildings or fortifications, abandoned skeletons with deadly impacts placed outside a regular cemetery or evidence of Magyar militaria on the site, which we might synchronise with the military activities in question;[61] decisions concerning the destiny of the land were obviously made elsewhere. Nonetheless, the decline in the importance of this centre is overtly evident; it underwent a transformation and its status deteriorated into that of an insignificant village. But a critical reduction in population probably did not happen, as is suggested by what is the largest Moravian cemetery from the Late Hillfort Period period (10th–12th century) at Sady near Uherské Hradiště containing almost one thousand graves.

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59 On the pages of this book Jiří Macháček draws attention to the discovery of a new settlement in the vicinity of the north-eastern suburb with finds of Magyar provenance and pottery different from that commonly used at Pohansko; he proposes the idea of the possible presence of a community connected with the nomadic environment which might have supervised and controlled life in the stronghold; it might have been a situation similar to that we also assume in the area of the Olomouc centre (see below). The fact that this settlement was overlain by flood deposits indicates abrupt changes of the climate, which must have taken place during the 10th century (in particular its first half); further Macháček 2012, 566–569 (including other relevant literature on the subject); Štefan 2011, 347.

60 Macháček, Balcárková, Dresler, Milo 2013, 735–775; Macháček, Wihoda 2013, 878–894.

61 Kouřil 2003, 120–122; Galuška 2008 260–261; 2014, 189–195. As Luděk Galuška kindly informed me the whole agglomeration had yielded hardly a dozen of typical rhombic arrowheads, which might invoke nomadic origin, mostly unearthed from the fill of features; I would like to thank L. Galuška for the information and his permission to publish some of the items (Fig. 3.2 : 3–4).

If we take a closer look at some other strongholds in South Moravia, we can realistically assume a Magyar attack in the case of Strachotín-Petrova louka, where we presently have over two dozen typical nomadic arrowheads available, and probably even Znojmo which has a pronounced destruction horizon, burnt perhaps as late as around the mid-10th century (?).[62] With the exception of Staré Zámky in Brno-Líšeň, we do not have detailed data on Pohansko near Nejdek or Osvětimany, in the wider Brno region we lack information on the position and the role of Réna near Ivančice, Rajhrad or Zelená Hora. But there is no doubt that Staré Zámky, an unusually rich site with a long tradition and central function, became the target of an attack by nomadic invaders.[63] A more detailed analysis of the local context is provided in a selection of earlier studies and here we should add that from that time the number of traditional Magyar arrowheads multiplied and they were distributed throughout the area of the stronghold and on its slopes (Fig. 3.3, 3.4).[64]

Infrequent finds of leaf-shaped arrowheads are also known from the funerary environment where they belonged to the grave goods of Slavic warriors, but they were quite clearly buried in accordance with the local tradition and with typical grave goods.[65] Only some were likely to be militaria which caused

62 Kouřil 2003, 124–125; Měřínský 1986, 37; the published arrowheads originating from regular archaeological excavation have been added to other items uncovered with a metal detector (ca 25 items in total). In the case of Znojmo we still lack a more detailed evaluation of the find contexts examined over the past two or three decades; the most recent summary Měřínský 2014, 209–213.

63 Kouřil 2013, 599–61. Probably sometime during the second half of the 10th century the site was re-activated for an extended period of time, which is also supported by denier coinage from the end of that century (including Bohemian and Moravian?), as well as later examples, small scales for weighing precious metals and bimetallic hall-marked weights of Scandinavian origin and, naturally, ceramic artefacts; further Kalčík 2015, 193; Videman 2015, 201–219.

64 Kouřil 2003, 126–127; 2008, 122–123. Presently, we can work with over three dozen arrowheads of this type and others, we are aware of, but which are not available to us being in private possession; we estimate that their total number may come close to fifty; they clearly outnumber the types with a socket and wings (just as in Mikulčice), which are generally thought to be militaria used by Slav warriors. However, we are not aware of any other objects which could be related to the nomadic east from there; unfortunately the site is systematically plundered by illegal metal detector forays and trenches and the data loss is immense.

65 We have pointed out a number of such burials earlier – Brno-Židenice, Dolní Věstonice, Mikulčice, Nenkovice, Pohansko near Břeclav, Staré Město, Stěbořice, Těšov (Kouřil 2003, 137–138; Kouřil – Tymonová 2013, 145–146), and the list may be extended with grave No. 167 from the necropolis in Horní Kotvice, where a leaf-shaped arrowhead (?) with a bent tip was part of objects buried in a pouch at the hip of the dead man (Fig. 3.2 : 5). Further Marešová 1983, 92–93, 127.

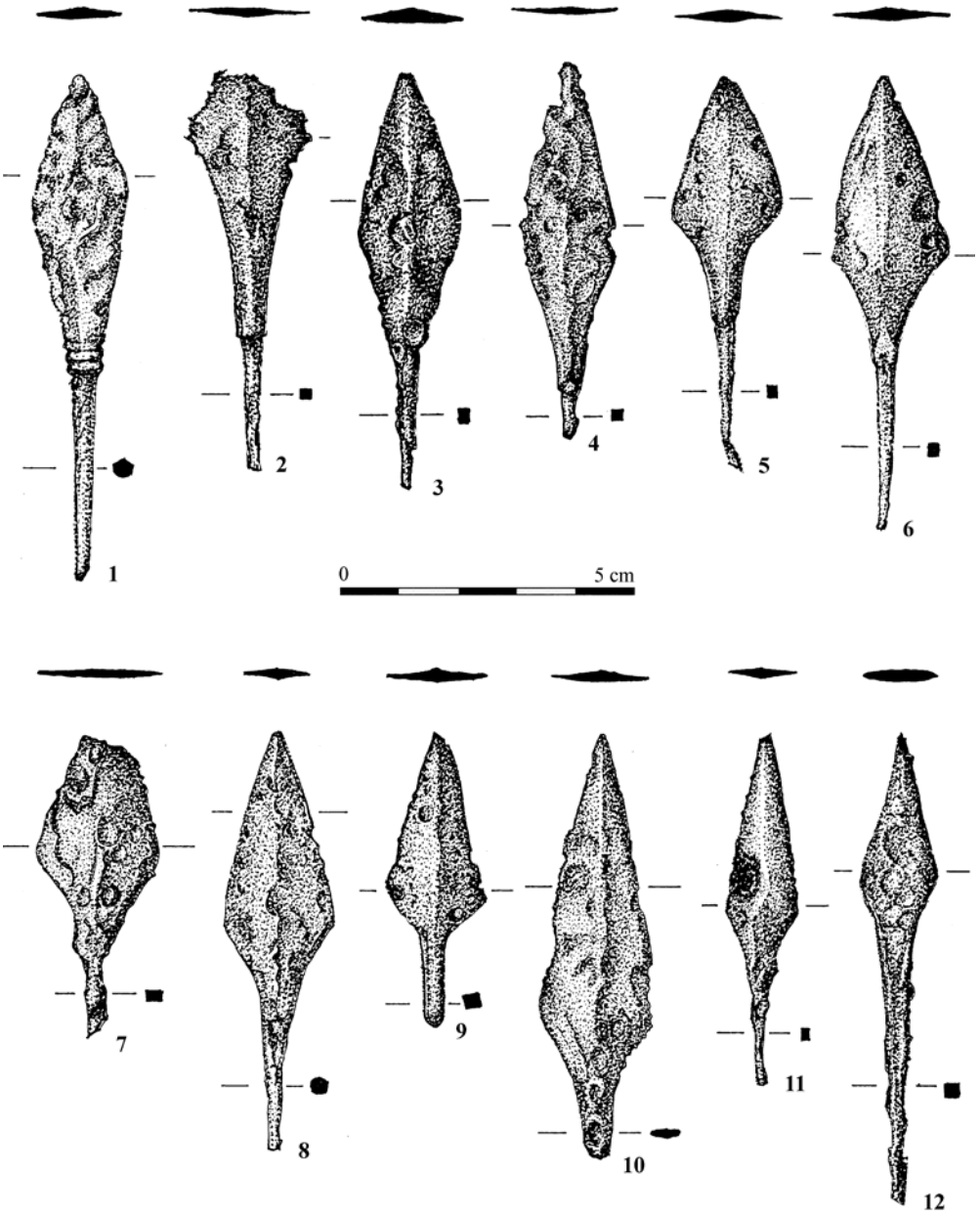

FIGURE 3.3 Staré Zámky in Brno-Líšeň: iron arrowheads of a composite bow (1–12)
DRAWING: J. GRIEBLEROVÁ

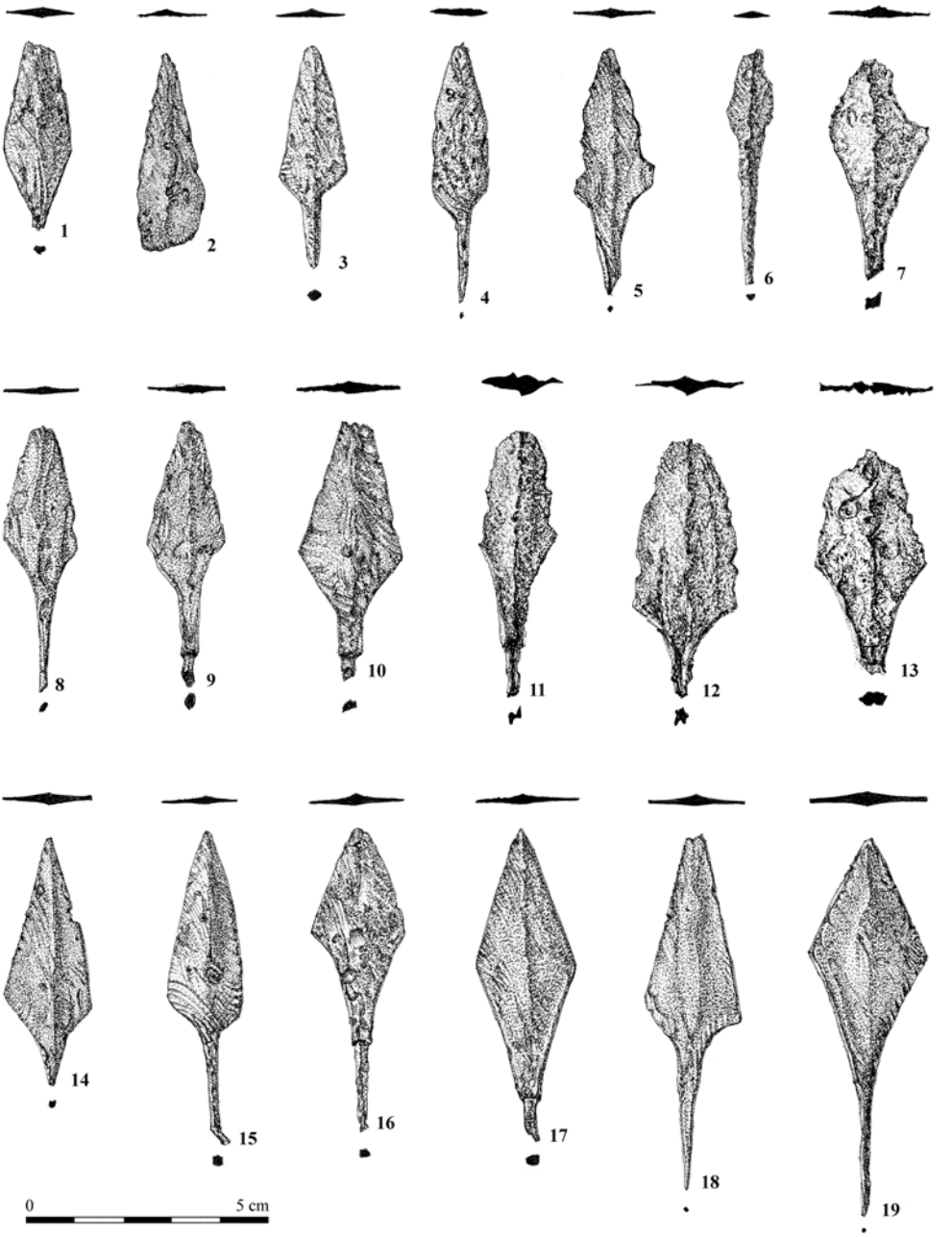

FIGURE 3.4 Staré Zámky in Brno-Líšeň: iron arrowheads of a composite bow (1–19)
DRAWING: J. GRIEBLEROVÁ

or contributed to the death of the deceased as a result of clashes with the new enemy from the east.[66] But unequivocally defined Magyar graves are so far missing within Moravia.[67]

As we have shown, it was the southern part, the core of the originally Great Moravian domain, including the Brno region, the zone of direct contact with Magyars, that was seriously affected; the situation in northern regions was different – in the Olomouc region (including the areas around Přerov, Prostějov, Kojetín and Kroměříž) or in regions north of the Moravian Gate, the Opava and Těšín regions.

Let us concentrate first on the crucial position of Olomouc, situated on the crossroads between important long-distance roads and the related wider area of the Haná region. Previous archaeological research did not bring any principal evidence signalling a devastating conflict. On the contrary, in a number of important metropolises situated on access routes to the centre (e.g. Olomouc-Slavonín, Olomouc-Nemilany and others), we can realistically take into consideration the continuity of burials until the late 10th and probably even the 11th century. These cemeteries also yielded a number of indicators (mainly pottery shapes – Fig. 3.5), weapons, horse burials, etc., which point to influence by the nomadic environment.[68] The fact that these manifestations are

66 With some relevance, this is how we approach the cases of the buried people in Mikulčice (grave No. 90 at the 6th church with an arrowhead in the pelvis area), Pohansko (especially grave No. 275 with an arrowhead in the chest), Rajhrad (double grave No. 492 with two arrowheads between the ribs of one of the skeletons), Brankovice (a mass grave of four male individuals with an arrowhead stuck in the pelvis of one of them). Further Kouřil 2008, 128–131 (including further references to literature), also Drozdová, Parma, Unger 2008, 323 and Olomouc (grave No. 424 in Václavské square with the arrowhead stuck in the backbone of the skeleton, which fatally wounded the buried man); further Zatloukal, Živný 2006, 386.

67 Neither do they include the recently discovered and difficult to date grave of an "archer" damaged by a mechanical excavator from the loam pit of the former brickyard in Držovice in Moravia, interred together with a horse burial, in which the buried man had a quiver with arrows under the left forearm, of which 10 massive arrowheads with wings have survived; further Fojtík 2015, 258–259; nor can an earlier, frequently published find of a horseman's grave from Břeclav – Přední Čtvrtky be taken into consideration as such (Měřínský 1986, 29; also Takács 2006, 227). Horse burials in the necropolis in Olomouc-Nemilany will be mentioned below. Concerning Magyar burials and the victims of Magyar attacks outside the Carpathian basin see Schulze-Dörrlamm 2002, 109–122.

68 In both cemeteries (Slavonín – grave No. 48, Nemilany – graves No. 2, 3, 30, 37, 59), and in Náměšť na Hané (triple grave + horse skeleton) special ceramic shapes appeared which are not inherent to the Slav environment. They are double-handle vessels of mostly bottle-like forms with perimeter ribs (or roll-shaped divisions) on the neck of some of them (which is sometimes considered a feature typical of the Kabar element of material culture?), or wide bowl-shaped (conical) or alternatively special (bottle-like) forms on a low

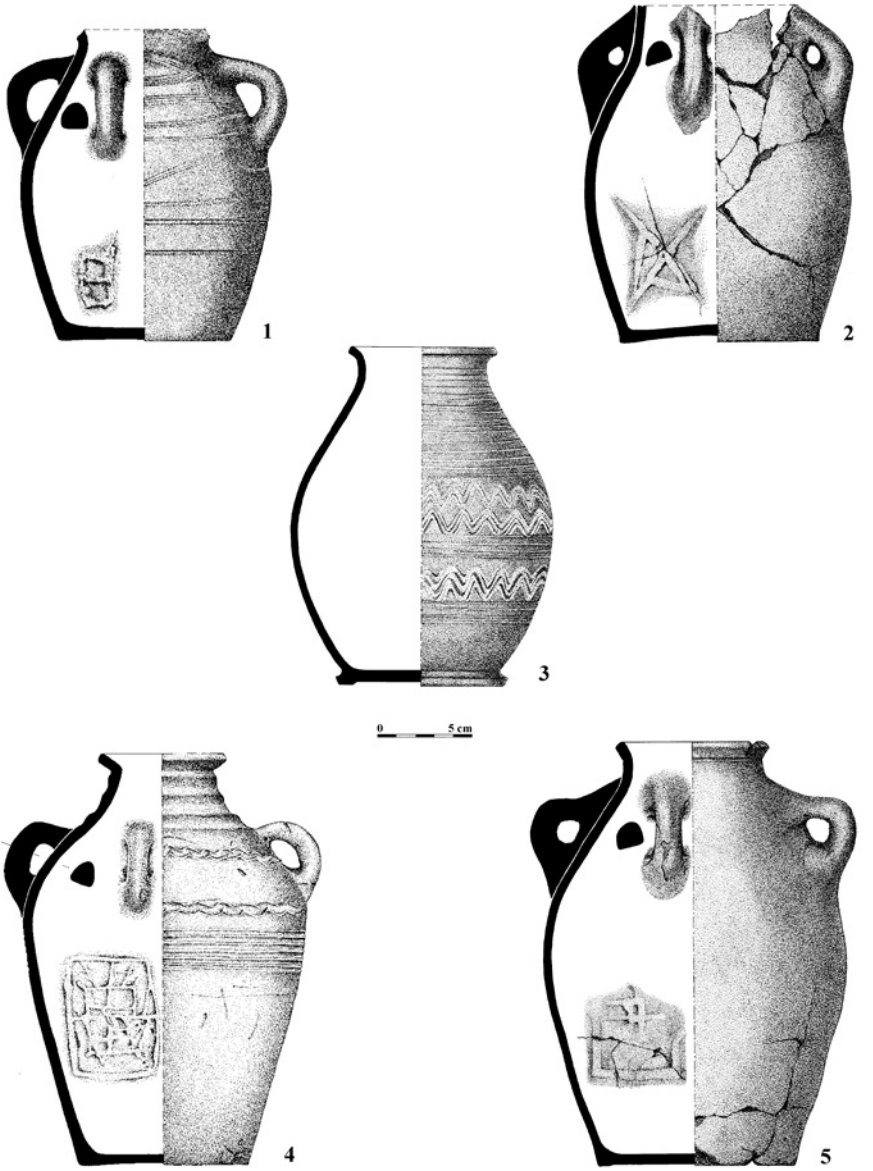

FIGURE 3.5 Unusual ceramic shapes in the Great Moravian cemeteries in the Olomouc agglomeration: Náměšť na Hané (1), Olomouc-Nemilany (2, 3, 5), Olomouc-Slavonín (4)
DRAWING: J. GRIEBLEROVÁ

not limited to one or two sites, but are also present in the wider hinterland of the Olomouc centre (such as Náměšť na Hané – pottery, horse burial) including more remote strategic locations near paths leading to the Bohemian basin (Biskupice – arrowheads,[69] Stavenice – bits (horse tackle), a bead – Fig. 3.6 : 1, 3, 5),[70] suggests that the assumed activity was not a one-off affair but lasted over a longer period, although we are unable to specify the time more precisely. At the same time, it suggests that, under the aegis of the new hegemons, local political-administrative powers, including ecclesiastical structures, were able – likely forced – to cooperate thus ensuring their continued survival.[71]

In the regions north of the Moravian Gate, in today's Upper Silesia, indications of penetration by eastern nomadic elements are very rare and, in addition, uncertain. Some sporadic evidence is available; the grave of a nomad (?)

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leg (or more precisely a cylindrical pedestal); they have a number of analogies on sites in the Carpathian basin. This pottery (used for funerary purposes) is thought to be a typical manifestation of the newly establishing ethnic group and persevered until the mid-10th century. Further Kouřil 2008, 123–127 (including a detailed analysis); Přichystalová 2014, 258–260; Takács 2000, 168; 1997, 88, shows identical double-handle forms from the sites in Streda nad Bodrogom, Čakajovce, Mosonszentmiklós and Tiszaeszlár-Újtelep, hence from the northern part of the Carpathian basin; a critical evaluation Merva 2013, 243–254, who suggests that this type of vessel appeared in the Carpathian basin later after the primary conquest of the land, as late as during the 10th–11th century and fulfilled a specific purpose (receptacle for milk products, jam, etc.). Further also Wolf 2013, 755–797. The interpretation of the horse burial interred with piety in the above-mentioned necropolises is not quite clear; we know that complete skeletons occur, albeit exceptionally, in cemeteries of the Slav population, and vice versa, it is known of Magyars that they placed only parts of the corpse (mainly the skull and limbs) into warrior graves including the skin (not the Pechenegs, who began to settle among Magyars in greater numbers roughly from the 10th century were directed mostly to the western border zones, buried the whole animal). Further Pálóczy-Horváth 1989, especially 7–38; Erdéli 1996, 63–166; in greater detail Vörös 2013, 321–336. Given the ceramic finds above, as well as a typical nomadic sabre (which is in no way a traditional Magyar sabre or its derivative), we rather tend towards the conclusion to consider the horse graves mentioned above an expression of the eastern nomadic milieu; concerning the sabre Takács 2006, 227; Jotov 2010, 217–225, states it is a type of a cutting weapon concentrated mainly in the southern Danube region and calls it a sabre of the "Bulgarian" type and assumes it found its way to that territory with the second Bulgarian settlement wave during the 9th century after the war with the Khazar Khaganate, particularly after the Pecheneg incursion in its last quarter. For the sake of completeness, let us add that the eastern circle of finds also embraces a cast bronze button with an eye unearthed from grave No. 16 in the Slavonín cemetery and perhaps even an engraving of a male figure on a bone from Václavské hillock, which might depict a nomad and be related to the Magyars (Fig. 3.6 : 2); more details Kouřil, Gryc 2014, 114–116.

69 Kouřil, Gryc 2014, 111–117; Profantová 2012, 153–156; Šlézar 2014, 75–90 (including a passage dedicated to the course of the road to the territory of East Bohemia).

70 More details and analogies Kouřil, Gryc 2014, 104–108.

71 Jan 2005, 19–23; Šlézar 2016, 105–109; 2014, 214–221.

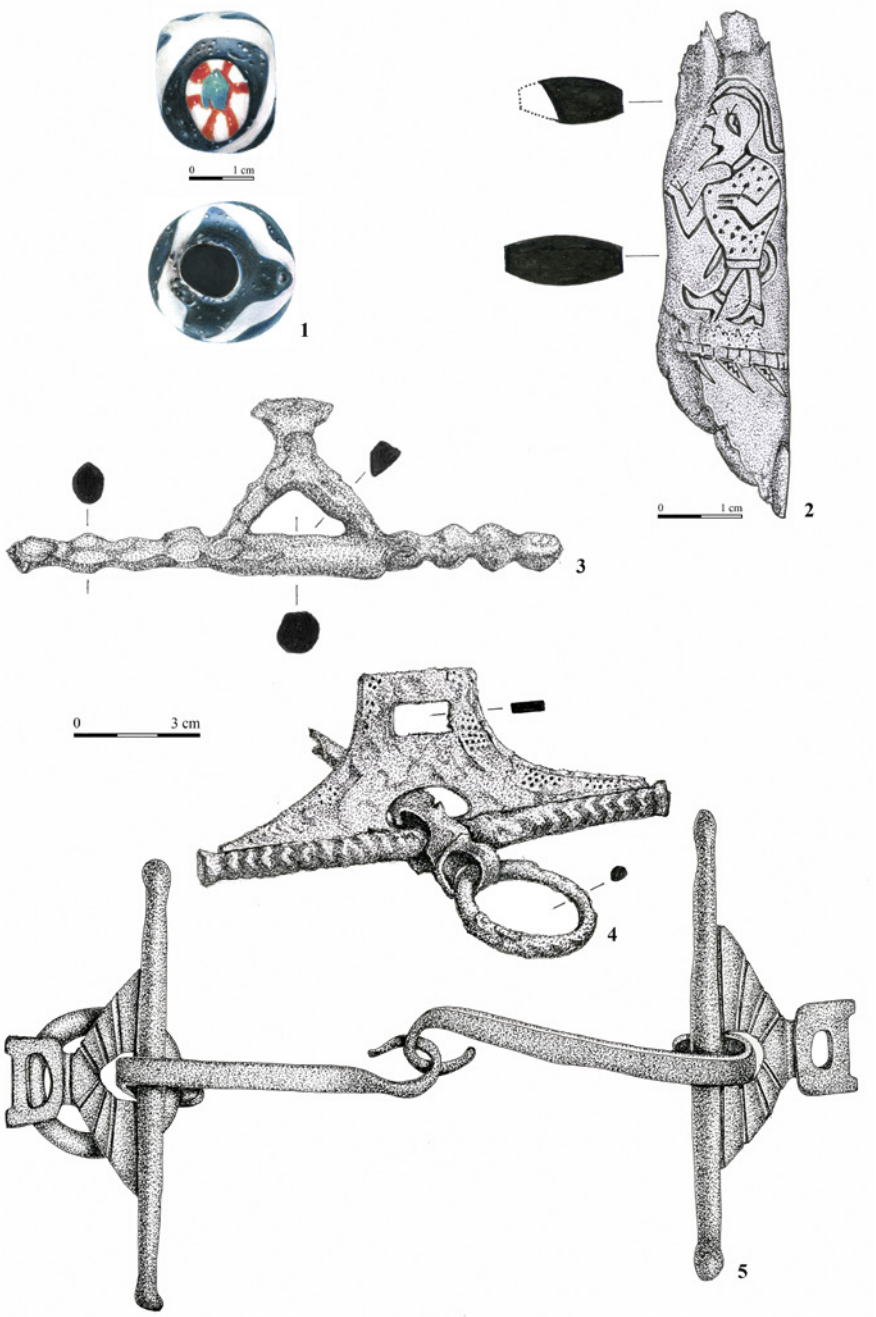

FIGURE 3.6 Stavenice: glass bead with fused-in decoration (1), iron sidepiece of a bit (3), iron bit with bronze sidepieces (5); Olomouc: engraving of a warrior (?) on a bone (2); Víno near Slezské Rudoltice: part of an iron bit (4)
DRAWING: J. GRIEBLEROVÁ

furnished with a typical sabre in Czechowice near Bielsko or a burial in Ściborzyce Wielke near Racibórz,[72] and a part of a bit from the Víno stronghold near Slezské Rudoltice (Fig. 3.6 : 4)[73] but these finds are the only indications currently known. A somewhat richer assortment is provided by some sites in Lower Silesia (Krotoszyce – bag closure, Tyniec Mały – stirrup, Legnica, Niedów, Rzymówka – parts of bits), but given that these finds were found together with artefacts assumed to be of Bohemian provenance (?), it is not impossible that they were brought there by Bohemians.[74] A small set of flat leaf-shaped arrowheads from the burial mound in Stěbořice[75] or the stronghold in Gilow[76] may not be directly connected with the nomads at all. The Magyars were obviously not attracted by these territories. However, in Silesia, in stark contrast to the neighbouring Malopolska, considerably more items of Magyar origin are found often in its eastern part, including the small, well-known cemetery in Przemyśl.[77]

We have already mentioned that in Bohemia we have available a much larger and more varied collection of items attributable to the Magyars than in Moravia. They are concentrated predominantly on fortified sites, particularly in the Elbe basin which was easy to pass through, and partly in other regions, mainly in the south.[78] It is there that we assume (archaeologically supported) co-operation of Magyars assisting the Přemyslids in the process of unifying Bohemia, specifically in conquering some of the local strongholds (such as Hradec near Němětice, 27 typical nomadic arrowheads), sometime in the first decades of the 10th century, though determining the precise date of the events is probably not possible.[79] A similar intrusion by the Magyars may be suggested, with necessary caution, by the set of arrowheads from the Benátky stronghold near Litomyšl. In contrast, non-confrontational contact and relationships

72 The inhumation burial in Czechowice was uncovered in 1879, together with a sabre (today nonexistent) it contained a Great Moravian bearded axe and a ceramic vessel. Further Parczewski 1982, 109, 127; Foltyn 2000, 84–85 (including an exhaustive list of literature); 2013, 242–245, 272–274 (including further literature).

73 Kouřil 2014 ed., 465.

74 Wachowski 1997, 61–62.

75 Kouřil, Tymonová 2013,145–146.

76 Jaworski 2005, 284.

77 An overview Poleski 2004, 172; 2013, 149; further Bronicki, Michalik, Wołoszyn 2003, 211–238; conditionally, as far as the arrowheads are concerned, Ginalski, Glinianowicz, Kotowicz 2013, 415–417; an overview also Świętosławski 2006, especially 122–124.

78 More details Profantová 2008, 149–168.

79 Most recently Lutovský 2014, 104–107; 2000, 174–178; 2001, 267–274. Magyar engagement in this territory is supported by the most recent find of a typical fokos; further Profantová 2016, 88–93.

between the nomads and Bohemian elites is indicated by the fact that nomadic elements of material culture (belt fittings, fittings of horse's tackle including saddles, other types of metal fittings, bits, stirrups, lining of a bow and its encasing, exceptional decorative items for women) are found in greater quantities predominantly in important strongholds and in contexts which did not show the signs of a violent end.[80] Certainly, they could have been brought there as gifts, exchange or loot (especially in 955), but arrowheads, stirrups, parts of saddles or a bow rather speak in favour of the former possibility. These objects suggest the possibility that the two ethnic groups cooperated during the Magyar raids into Western Europe, with the occasional participation of Bohemian and/or Moravian warriors.

Whether it was during the first intrusions into Saxony (906, 908) at the instigation of the slavic tribe Glomacze (Dolomici) is uncertain, but the Přemyslids are sure to have permitted passage by the new Central European leaders through the territory they controlled; historical research assumes Bohemian participation in the new incursion into Saxony in 915, but the later shift to becoming allies of the Saxon dynasty at the expense of the Bavarians was to result in the end of the Bohemian-Magyar alliance (919–920). In 924 the Magyars plundered Saxonia again, this time probably without their Slav allies, but they most likely had to pass through Moravia and Bohemia just as in 933, when they were defeated and suffered relatively heavy losses. Another Bohemian-Magyar alliance is presumed following a successful action of Boleslaus I in 936 against one of the dukes perhaps in north-west Bohemia (?) and his Saxon ally. The Prague Přemyslid, worrying about Saxon revenge, probably sought out help with the Magyars, who indeed in 938 repeated (for the last time) their invasion of Saxon territory; and it may have been during this campaign, which was very likely again led through Moravia and Bohemia, that they helped Boleslaus crush local resistance in South Bohemia (?).[81] Good Bohemian-Magyar relations probably endured until 950, when Boleslaus I submitted to King Otto I (emperor from 962) and by this act he definitively parted company with his former eastern allies. The suggested political U-turn was reflected in Bohemian participation at the Battle of Lechfeld (955), when the supremacy of the Magyars was definitively undermined, and in the same year by the alleged victory of the Bohemian Duke over them in a confrontation thought to have

80 Konstantinos Porfyrogenétos in his flagship work *De administrando imperio* writes that the so-called White Croats have their own ruler (Boleslaus I?), are subjected to Otto, the great Frankish i.e. Saxon king, are not baptised and marry and are friendly with Turks; some researchers relate this passage directly to Bohemians and Magyars. Further in: *MMFH* III, 388; Steinhübel 2012, 95; also on the subject Bakala 2004, 19–27, 121.

81 Steinhübel 2008, 48–50; 2012, 77–96; Třeštík 1997, 401–405, 429–431, 435–436.

taken place somewhere in Moravian territory;[82] for the Magyars it also marked the beginning of their transformation to a sedentary way of life, embracing Christianity and building their own state.[83] It is obvious that in this period Moravia (whatever its extent was) must have been controlled by Bohemia, in the Olomouc region, a key strategic point on one of the branches of the west-east trade superhighway leading from West Europe as far as China, probably directly by Boleslaus' men, in the other parts of the land his influence could have also been exercised through local leaders (?). By this we proceed to a rather different temporal plane when after the tempestuous last decades of the 10th and the beginning of the 11th century Moravia became permanently incorporated into the union of the Czech lands.

3.4 Two Thoughts in Conclusion

What then came to an end when Great Moravia collapsed? That had most likely been a loose and non-heterogeneous territorial conglomerate, albeit with a firmly formed and defined centre, but with unstable social, economic, political and ecclesiastical foundations. In short, in the early 10th century Great Moravia was something the building of which had not been completely finished, something that had not been fully established, with a *gens Moravorum* that was just beginning to take shape. It may be the reason why the ferocious onslaught of the Finno-Ugric Magyars was successful and had a dramatic impact on the curtailed and exhausted Moravia, and why its collapse, however surprising in a relatively civilised Central- and West-European environment, was unavoidable. However, we see in this context, at least based on how we perceive the most recent data, a quite striking difference between its eastern regions (around Nitra) and Moravia proper, the former most probably organically and without more serious losses, in close co-operation with the nomadic element, gradually blended, together with its elites, into the newly formed cultural and political circle creating something of a foundation (substrate) on which the Magyar monarchy was later to be established.[84] Moravia faced the Magyar impact in its full intensity, and the result was the liquidation or pauperization of its key centres and agglomerations, as well as of its elites residing

82 Lutovský 1998, 80n; partly also Žemlička 1997, 35–51; Steinhübel 2012, 100.

83 Zimonyi 2005, 36–37.

84 We are referring here to the so-called Bielo Brdo cultural circle of the 10th–11th century, which is characteristic mainly for the Carpathian basin; from Moravia or Bohemia we are aware of only a handful of its typical examples, as has been pointed out earlier Dostál 1981, 82; also Měřínský 1986, 37 and Profantová 2008, 164–165.

in those centeres. That must have in turn led to the rapid decline of the rural settlements;[85] it is probable that part of the population moved away from the Moravian-Magyar contact zone to better protected locations in Central and perhaps even West Moravia. It is possible that skilled craftsmen along with a portion of the aristocracy found new opportunities in nearby Bohemia and perhaps in the Bavarian region and elsewhere.[86] It seems though that the new Central European hegemons were not really interested in occupying the territory. We can only speculate as to whether they did not find it beneficial, did not have sufficient (human) resources or the land no longer had anything to offer them. Alternatively, there might have existed a kind of agreement between Magyars and the Prague Přemyslids, who could make claims for Moravia based on a (naturally unconfirmed) family relationship with the Mojmirids. As allies, their claims were naturally complied with by the Magyars.[87] We register only infrequent evidences of the nomads within Moravian territory, although we cannot completely rule out deployment of their garrisons in exposed locations. Furthermore, we do not know of any Magyar cemeteries in Moravia. That Moravia proper was not fully pacified and paralysed is suggested both by archaeological observations including confirmation of the continuity of development, particularly in the Olomouc region, but also indirectly by the account of Magyar warriors themselves taken captive during a raid on the Iberian Peninsula near Lérida in 942, where they relate that their land borders on the north with a territory (town) called Morávia or Morábia.[88]

To return to Pohansko and its rotunda with a cemetery and a profane district, it seems plausible (as the head of the excavation also presumes), that it was really a proprietary church and burial place for the donator at the most prestigious

85 The evaluation of selected rural South Moravian necropolises indicates a certain continuity in burials between the 9th–10th/11th century, although probably not in all cases; further Ungerman 2014, especially 253–255; Unger 2013, especially 285.

86 In this context, let as point out, for instance, the recently published "bold" hypothesis by Urbańczyk 2012, esp. 129–165. It is based on older theories but also on newer archaeological observations (e. g. Kara 2009) regarding a possible Moravian origin of the Piast dynasty whose founders are deemed to have started, formed and organised the patrimonial domain in Great Poland as a continuation of the Great Moravian model. They are thought to have moved into the northern regions after the loss of their positions following the fall of Great Moravia. It should be noted that this conjecture has met with fairly strong criticism by reputable Polish researchers – both historians and archaeologists – most recently Poleski 2017, 65–67.

87 This is proposed, for example Steinhübel 2012, 80.

88 The text mentions the city of Moravia (Murāwa), but from the diction of the source it can be inferred that it was a territory (after all, if Mikulčice should really have been that city of Moravia, as is sometimes assumed, at that time it almost certainly no longer existed). Further Zimonyi 2004, 29; also Měřínský 2012, 161–168 (including further literature).

location and his family inside the church; an important point is that the graves were virtually free of grave goods, which rather convincingly testifies to relatively deep conversion.[89] At the same time it indicates that the founder must have belonged to an important family and rubbed shoulders with the top echelons of Great Moravian society, although we do not expect that he was directly a member of the ruling dynasty. If he had a church of his own with the adjacent farmstead and "service personnel" it cannot be refuted that he was a private owner of landed property (comp. note 33). What his position was in relation to the stronghold itself and its lord, and what his fortunes were in the chaotic times at the beginning of the 10th century is uncertain. Multiple explanations are possible, depending on a detailed publication on the necropolis around the centre and the overall evaluation of the settlement complex. Let us point out there are assumptions of magnate's courts with sacred buildings in the nearby Mikulčice, although they were not unanimously accepted,[90] and, in a number of other locations, we have evidence of contexts which, in our opinion, allow for this interpretation.[91]

89 This elite, after its embrace of Christianity, did not manifest itself through magnificent burials but by building their own proprietary churches as family vaults; for the Carinthian environment see Eichert 2012, 352.

90 Kouřil 2010, 64; critically, for example, Mazuch 2012, 142; also Poláček 2010, 48.

91 Kouřil 2009, 359–376; Müller 1995, 91–100; more than 30 churches built in Blatnograd/Zalavár and its surroundings at the time of Pribina and his son Kocel very likely indicate the existence of courts with sacred buildings of the individual magnates in a similar environment; further Szöke 2010, 567–568; 2014, 262–267.

CHAPTER 4

The Second Life of the Mojmirid Dukes

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Translated by *Miloš Bartoň*

The sudden collapse of the Mojmirid possessions in the Central Danube region may have taken contemporaries by surprise.[1] Later sources, however, seem to agree on why that had happened.[2] Even in the remote abbey of Prüm, there was some talk that until 894 the Moravian Slavs (*Marahensium Sclavorum*) had been ruled by Svatopluk, that the reign (*regnum*) was taken over by his sons and that the established order was afterwards (*pauco tempore*) overthrown by the Magyars.[3] The shrinking world of the Moravian dukes hadleft a bitter memory in Bavaria, which in the chaos that followed lost a number of prominent leaders, such as Count Liutpold and the Salzburg metropolitan Theotmar,[4] as well as its influence as borders shifted to the Enns river, where Charlemagne waged a war against the Avars in 791.[5] If these painful losses were not enough, in the second half of the 10th century Liutprand of Cremona accused King Arnulf and Bavarians of having some obstacles being cleared away and called on the Magyars (*Hungariorum gentem*) against Moravians, and then with a priggish note that by overcoming one man he plunged the whole of Europe into ruin (*unius homuntii deiectio fit totius Europae contricio*), Liutprand turned his attention to the present day in order to charge the Bavarians with intrigue and hostility.[6] The same ink-fountain was used by Widukind of Corvey, who detailed that the great wall was built by Charlemagne and that the land was devastated because of the vindictive Arnulf.[7]

Liutprand of Cremona and Widukind of Corvey were close to the ruling Saxon dynasty and it is no wonder that they sought to blame Bavaria for the troubles they experienced; it was, afterall the stronghold of the empire's

1 The study was carried out as a part of the project of excellence Centre for Cross-Disciplinary research into Cultural Phenomena in the Central European History: Image, Communication, Behaviour (GACR 14–36521G).

2 Albrecht 2014, 37–82.

3 *Reginonis abbatis Prumenis Chronicon*, MGH SRG [50.], 143.

4 Steinhübel 2007, 57–65.

5 Brunner 2008, 24–33.

6 *Liudprandi episcopi Cremonensis Antapodosis I/13*, MGH SRG [41.], 15–16.

7 *Widukindi monachi Corbeiensis Rerum gestarum Saxonicarum I/19*, MGH SRG [60.], 29.

 | DOI:10.1163/9789004392878_005

opposition.[8] Embarrassment alternated with insecurity in Bohemia where they most likely had first-hand confirmation from the wave of refugees heading into Bohemia. It is possible that Moravian priests incorporated the story into the Introduction to the Life and Martyrdom of Saint Wenceslas and Saint Ludmila. According to the legend, the Greeck native Cyril travelled to the Moravians and translated the Old and New Testament from Greek and Latin and began to serve mass in the local language. Cyril succeeded in defending the new customs before the Pope, but as he decided to take his vows in Rome, the unfinished work was taken over by his brother Methodius.[9] With the blessing of the Moravian ruler, Methodiuswas appointed archbishop. His tenure however was terminated when Svatopluk, a nephew of the noble duke or king, seized power, he let the people serve the devil, by which he inflicted disaster on the land and its people, from which Moravia has suffered to "our days".[10]

Most historians assume the legend was composed by a monk named Christian,[11] which dates "this day" (*usque in hodiernum diem*) to the end of the 10th century. It is important to consider the possibility that the storyteller, withone-hundred years of hindsight, adapted the fate of the Moravians into a parable to caution against a light-minded relationship to faith.[12] Later, at the beginning of 12th century, the Dean of Saint Vitus, Cosmas, also came to terms with the decline of the Moravians, and while he often, delighted looking into the chronicle by Regino of Prüm and was by no means adverse to literal borrowings,[13] – this time he found the venerable model insufficient. Therefore, he added that Svatopluk, who refused to obey Emperor Arnulf, remorsefully absconded to Zobor Mountain, where he killed his horse, buried his sword, entered a monastery unrecognized, and allegedly spent the rest of his life there while his land was divided up between the Hungarians, East Germans and Poles.[14]

The Dean of Saint Vitus Cosmas may have left Svatopluk at the centre of action, but while Christian shortly before the year 1000 abhorred the idea that the Bohemians might succumb to heresy, at the beginning of the 12th century he himself advocated loyalty and sacred pledges to the imperial court. At the same time, both adapted the Moravian story to their own image; this leads us to the question of who the Mojmirids really were and why accusations that

8 Karpf 1985, 5–47, 144–175.
9 *Legenda Christiani 1*, 1978, 12, 14.
10 *Legenda Christiani 1*, 1978, 14, 16.
11 Třeštík 1999, 602–612.
12 Kalhous 2012, 193–208.
13 Třeštík 1960, 564–587.
14 *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica Boemorum I/14*, MGH SRG NS II, 32–34.

FIGURE 4.1 The Mojmirid domain around 890: blue – hereditary possession, oblique lines – directly administered territories, horizontal lines – independent territories or under Mojmirid influence; 1 – Mikulčice-Valy; 2 – Staré Město-Uherské Hradiště; 3 – Pohansko u Břeclavi; 4 – Znojmo-Hradisko svatého Hypolita; 5 – Staré Zámky near Líšeň (Brno); 6 – Zelená Hora near Vyškov; 7 – Olomouc; 8 – Nitra; 9 – Děvín (Bratislava)
AUTHOR: M. WIHODA

they ledt their subjects (*gens*) to destruction were levelled against them. Is this perhaps the result of the familiar adage that history is written by the victors, or do the records hide a chain of events that ultimately led to the fall of the powerful ducal dynasty? If so, how can we place the discovery of the second church at Pohansko, which by all indications survived the disruption of the Mojmirid domains (Fig. 4.1), into the familiar context?

4.1 Hereditary Rulers of the Moravians

An interesting argument was presented by the Salzburg metropolitan Theotmar; in the summer of 900 he bitterly complained, on behalf of the Bavarian bishops, that Pope John IX promised the Moravians an Archbishopric even though the land was subject (*subacta fuerat*) to Frankish kings, the people paid tithes (*in tributo substantie secularis*) and the Mojmirids, that is Slavs

(*Moimarii vero Sclaui*), had arisen from unbelievers and pagans (*a paganis et ethnicis venerunt*).[15] He found conclusive evidence for his argument in a panegyric written around 870[16] and argued that Theotmar's predecessors had spread the faith among the Slavs even during the time of Charlemagne. It was only later that the duke of the Moravians (*dux Maravorum*) Mojmir, who ruled over the Danube (*supra Danubium*).[17]

Pribina, pursued by Mojmir, found protection from Count Ratpot in the Eastern March, and as he had built a church on his former property (*in sua proprietate*) in Nitra, consecrated by the metropolitan Adalram,[18] the event can be dated to roughly between the years 827/828 and 833.[19] The rest was recounted by the Fulda chronicler mentioning a campaign of Louis the German against the Moravian Slavs (*ad Sclavos Margenses*), who wanted to liberate themselves from their Frankish bonds, and as a result Mojmir's nephew Rostislav was appointed their duke in 846.[20] This unfortunately not easily comprehensible record confirms that the Carolingian dynasty from East Francia approached the Moravians as people subordinated to them and that the Mojmirid dukes were pledged by an oath of loyalty.[21] As a result, it could be voiced at the Synod of Mainz in 852 that a certain Albgis ehad loped with Patrik's wife to the Moravians, meaning the remotest corner of the kingdom (*ad extremos fines regni*).[22]

The vows pledged with oaths did not have to be extensive; they may have started and ended with a regular tribute, though that does not necessarily mean that the Mojmirids fulfilled any imposed obligations without objection. Rostislav claimed even greater freedom when during a war in 855 he retreated behind some strong ramparts, and after the withdrawal of the Frankish his troops crossed the Danube to plunder the adjoining territories.[23] Rectification did not happen until 864, when Rostislav released the hostages and pledged an oath of loyalty in the name of himself and all the leaders (*cum universis optimatibus suis fidem se cunctis diebus regi servaturum esse iuramento firmavit*).[24] However, according to the exceptionally well-informed annalist from Fulda,

15 MMFH III, 196–208, No 109; *Die Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum*, 1997, 55–87; 138–157.
16 *Die Conversio Bagoariorum*, 1997, 5–8.
17 *Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum 10*, MMFH III, 310–311.
18 *Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum 11*, MMFH III, 312.
19 Wolfram 1995, 323.
20 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 36.
21 Goldberg 2004, 67–94.
22 *Capitularia regum Francorum II*, MGH Legum sectio II, 184–191, No 249.
23 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 45–46.
24 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 62.

the duke of the Moravians did not kept his word, and hostilities broke out again in August 869. The main Frankish forces besieged Rostislav's "indescribable and incomparable" stronghold, while an auxiliary contingent, led by Louis's son Carloman of Bavaria, ravaged the domain (*regnum*) of Svatopluk,[25] until Svatopluk offered peace to Carloman. Rostislav saw the agreement as a ploy and attempted to eliminate his nephew but was unsuccessful as was captured in 870 and was sentenced to death by a common judgement (*iudicium*) of the Bavarians, the Franks and the Slavs. Louis the German commuted this sentence and Rostislav he was 'only' blinded and permitted to retire to a monastery for the rest of his days.[26]

Life imprisonment was reserved for perjurers, and Rotislav's punishment further indicates that the Mojmirids had the status of vassals of the Frankish empire. At the same time, they clearly possessed the rights of hereditary rulers, and when Svatopluk was accused of perfidiousness (*infidelitatis crimine*), Moravian matters were taken over by the Counts (*duces Karlmanni*) Wilhelm II and Engelschalk. The Moravians compelled Slavomir, a priest thought to be Svatopluk's relative, to spearhead an uprising. The disquieted Carloman had the imprisoned duke brought before him and Svatopluk solemnly promised to firmly deal with the insurgents, and was allowed to return to Moravia in 871.[27] The acceptance of this pledge stirred the Fulda chronicler to renew his lament over Slav treacherousness; soon after that Svatopluk allegedly forgot his oath and convinced Slavomir to join him and together they destroyed the Bavarian troops in front of the old Mojmirid residence.[28]

Svatopluk, familiar with how the Frankish empire operated, did not overstate the significance of the victory, and in 873 he sent one of the captives, Alemann Berethram, to Louis the German pleading for peace.[29] A year later he repeated, via his proxy John of Venice,[30] that the Moravians were ready to swear to be faithful and pay the levied fee,[31] and he did likewise in 884 on Mount Comiano in the Central Danube region, where he pledged in person and in front of Emperor Charles III an oath of fealty (*fidelitatem iuramento*) and accepted the obligations of a vassal (*homo, sicut mos est*).[32]

25 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 67–69.
26 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 70–72; *Annales Bertiniani*, MGH SRG [5.], 113–114; *Annales Xantenses et Annales Vedastini*, MGH SRG [12.], Hannover 1909, 30.
27 On the division of power in the Carolingian Empire see Kasten 1997, 498–547.
28 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 73–74.
29 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 78.
30 Havlík 1968, 80–88.
31 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 83.
32 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 113.

A public oath (*iuramento firmatum est*) was also made in 901 at the general council (*generalis placitum*) in Regensburg, where Moravian envoys (*misi*) made peace with the Bavarians. That both parties attached considerable weight to the meeting is testified by the journey of the Passau bishop Richar, who under protection of Count Udalrich crossed the Moravian border.[33] The Fulda chronicler withheld the name of the host, but nevertheless the Bavarian mission was probably received by Duke Mojmir II, who in 898 rid himself of his brother Svatopluk. The Fulda chronicler paints a grim portrait of events that, if accepted, suggests a fratricidal animosity between the two Moravian brothers (*duos fratres gentis Marahensium*) so vitriolic that, had one brother captured the other, he would have immediately passed a sentence of death..[34] The skirmishes between the siblings soon required intervention by King Arnulf,[35] who charged Liutpold, Arbo, and his son Isanrik, with the protection of Frankish interests.[36] After conquering some settlement the imprisoned boy (*puer*) Svatopluk was taken to Bavaria together with his faithful followers (*suumque populus*).[37]

The Mojmirid power over the Moravians was that of a dynasty, in that succession to the throne was not just a matter of relations between father and son, but one pertaining to the entire family. It is enough to refer the year 871, when the Moravians entrusted power to the priest Slavomir just because he was a relative (*propinquus*) of Duke Svatopluk. The fact, that Slavomir was reluctant and that the Moravians resorted to threats (*ei minantes interitum*),[38] further suggests that succession was based on some sacred contract and that there was a mythical story circulating among the Moravians, just like that that later circulated among Bohemians,[39] which explained why the Mojmirids had been entrusted with power over the land and the people.

It is important to also consider the relationship between lord and vassal, touched upon by essentially all Frankish chronicles and annals. By far the most complete picture comes from the Fulda chronicle; it clearly illustrates that a pledge of fealty was made by all of Moravia's rulers; the need for the Frankish empire to continually remind the Slavs in the Central Danube basin who they owed obligations of service and tribute to attests to the ongoing efforts of the This is also supported Mojmirids to loosen up their bond to the

33 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 135.
34 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 131–132.
35 Dopsch 2002, 143–186.
36 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 132.
37 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 133.
38 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 73.
39 Třeštík 1965, 305–314.

Franks. Consequently, cross-border skirmishes alternated with peaceful cohabitation; Moravia was considered a wild, but undisputed part of the Carolingian world. The Mojmirids managed to become close to Frankish counts and margraves[40] and Svatopluk reportedly had such a close friendship with King Arnulf (*familiaritatis gratia fuerunt conexus*), that he was invited to the baptism of his son, the future Lothringian King Zwentibald.[41]

The flexible system of cross-border links pulled the Mojmirids into the imperial affairs, but a fixed place on the map of East Central Europe was secured by the Moravians mainly due to the internal stability of their community. Despite the chronological distance, the Moravians may well be compared to the Avars. Like them, they seem to have chosen to ground political authority on the treasure, which, in a manner eerily similar to stories about the fabulous hoard of the Avar khagans seized by the Charlemagne,[42] is said to have been captured (*gaza regia*) in 870 by Louis' son Carloman.[43] Neither is it known where the primacy of the Mojmirid clan stemmed from, although a report by the Fulda chronicler that the Moravians by themselves and outside the knowledge of the appointed Frankish counts designated a duke (*sibi in principem constituunt*),[44] does not exclude the possibility that the hereditary status was one but not the only one provision of the succession rules and that the leaders had the right to a vote and together with it a share in the administration of the public space.[45]

Regardless, the established order collapsed within a short time and the Central Danube basin fell into disarray.[46] Astonished observers either went silent or blamed everything on Emperor Arnulf, or alternately, Svatopluk.[47] Obviously, nobody expected or predicted the approaching catastrophe and evidence suggests that after the first clashes with the Magyar invaders, the situation normalized as power balance returned to the status quo and long-distance trade routes were restored.[48] However, roughly at the same time the

40 Stieldorf 2012.
41 *Reginonis abbatis Prumenis Chronicon*, MGH SRG [50.], 134. Further in Štrbáková 2013, 177–229.
42 Pohl 1998, 178–185.
43 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 71.
44 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 73.
45 Wihoda 2010, 86–94.
46 Hiestand 1994, 1–20.
47 Wihoda 2008, 129–136.
48 McCormick 2002, 171–180.

Magyar chief Kusal[49] was treacherously killed and it was most likely the following crushing revenge that sealed the fate of the Moravian dukes.[50] The acropolis in Mikulčice was razed to the ground; the garrison tried to defend both of the gates but after the line was broken, the remaining defenders retreated to the churches with their stone walls. The church district at Sady near Staré Město was not spared from the depredations of pillaging invaders; visible traces were left by the Magyars at Pohansko, and there is clear evidence of fighting at Strachotín, while Staré Zámky near Líšeň and Hradisko svatého Hypolita in Znojmo were left in ruins.[51]

The defeat of the Moravians was still lamented years later by Liutprand of Cremona,[52] who nevertheless omitted the fact that the Magyars soon withdrew beyond the Danube, so that their influence in the Nitra region was indirect,[53] and in the central Morava basin totally insignificant. In other words, the Moravians may have suffered heavy losses, but they nevertheless continued to administer their own affairs and probably professed Christian belief.[54] Yet, the Moravians only managed to resuscitate the old order at a provincial scale in the Olomouc region and maybe in South-west Moravia, around Staré Zámky near Líšeň, and probably even in Hradisko svatého Hypolita. Mikulčice, along with Pohansko slowly faded and the Staré Město settlement, with its merchants and craftsmen, declined into an ordinary village.[55]

If we accept that the power of the Mojmirid dukes sprang from the market frequented by merchants from Venice and the Frankish empire, it is evident why the principal Mojmirid settlement on the Morava river vanished. Such centers could only flourish on long-distance routes of linking Central Europe to the Mediterranean, but such routes were seriously disrupted by Magyar incursions between 904 and 907.[56] Olomouc, on the other hand, retained some significance, so why did the Mojmirids not move there? Were they not welcome in that place, or had their last men perhaps perished in a last-ditch battle?

49 *Annales Alamannici*, MGH SS I, 54; in a similar way as of 902 *Annales Sangallenses maiores*, MGH SS I, 77.

50 Třeštík 1987, 36–37.

51 Kouřil 2003, 110–146.

52 *Liudprandi episcopi Cremonensis Antapodosis II/2*, MGH SRG [41.], 36–37.

53 Steinhübel 2008, 39–50.

54 Jan 2006, 251–264.

55 An overview with a number of pieces of evidence in Procházka 2009.

56 Štefan 2011, 333–354.

4.2 Praise of Consanguinity

Until recently it was unanimously believed that Duke Mojmir II was killed in the environs of Nitra, while his younger brother died in prison or exile.[57] Nonetheless, the later tradition accuses the Mojmirids of serious offences, as if cursed forever. Moreover, judging from the rather confusing sources pertaining to the last years of Great Moravia, fighting took place particularly along the lower course of the Morava river, which suggests that the target was the core of the Mojmirid domain. This further raises the question of whether the Magyar warriors were acting on their own or were rather an instrument of revenge, an idea that brings us back to the idea that the community of the Moravians (*gens Maraensium*) was bonded by a sacred agreement which the Mojmirids, which was probably broken in an irremediable manner. It is likely that a concerted attack on the center and symbols of the Mojmirid power led to the elimination of a whole dynasty of dukes and their disappearance from the radar of the written (primarily Frankish) sources.

Exile might have weakened Mojmirid influence among the Moravians but is it realistic to link the decline in the Lower Morava basin with the complete end of a ducal family? There are some indications that the dense network of clan bonds along the male and female lines successfully averted the social decline of the Mojmirids. Let us consider the examples of Counts Wilhelm and Engelschalk, whom Carloman entrusted with the administration of Moravia.[58] They both lost their lives in 871,[59] but when Louis the German ceded the border march to Count Arbo,[60] the decree was challanged by their relatives (*propinqui*), who, in the name of the descendants of the deceased counts (*predictorum virorum pueruli*), declared Arbo an enemy.[61] Arbo, suddenly at odds with several factions, joined forces with Svatopluk and, as a token of good intent gave him his son Isanrik as a hostage, while the Wilhelminers sought protection from the Bavarian leaders and most probably in 882 removed Arbo from power.[62] However, Arbo with Svatopluk's support took the offensive. In 884 the Moravians captured Engelschalk's son, Werinhar, and mercilessly severed his tongue, his right hand, and his manhood.[63] Shortly thereafter, during a skirmish at the Rába river, they killed Werinhar's older brother Pabo and his

57 Along this line Wihoda 2014, 79–84.
58 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 70–71.
59 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 73–74.
60 Dopsch 1993, 55–62.
61 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 110.
62 Krah 1987.
63 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 111.

brother-in-law, Wilhelm's first-born son Megingoz.[64] The surviving Wilhelmins entered into the service of Carloman's son, Arnulf (*fieri homines Arnolfi*),[65] and after a meeting on Mount Comiano in 884,[66] were granted a pardon for the scandalous elopement of Engelschalk II with Arnulf's illegitimate daughter in 893. Engelschalk had been the administrator of the Eastern March and had oppose the Bavarian magnates. After a short trial, he was blinded. His cousin Wilhelm II, accused of sending messages to Svatopluk, received a more severe, terminal punishment. At the same time in Moravia, Wilhelm's brother Rutbert was murdered, allegedly as part of a ploy (*insidioso consilio*) of Duke Svatopluk.[67]

The Wilhelmins found no support among the Bavarians or the Moravians and suffered serious losses.[68] Nonetheless, Wilhelmin names still appear as witnesses in charters that towards the end of his term and life, the archbishop of Salzburg, Odalbert, had copied and organized. Sometimes alone, at other times as groups of kin, the noblemen Wilhelm, Engelschalk, Rutbert, Werinhar and Pabo appear as witnesses between 923 and 935, an indication that they still lived in the environs of Salzburg. None of them is called a count (*comes*), but it is quite possible that were all descendants of those Wilhelmins who had suffered defeat and punishment. Nonetheless, the descendants seems to have still exercised a good deal of control over family estates and tradition.[69]

The remarkable resilliance of the cruelly persecuted clan, which repeatedly lost its leaders, testifies to the extraordinary stability the extensive kinship structures. However, the Mojmirids, against whom the Wilhelm's clan waged a vendetta, truly belonged to the Carolingian world, while another group of Frankish magnates found a natural ally in Svatopluk. Emperor Charles III forced reconciliation between the two camps on Mount Comiano.

Moravia might have opened to Frankish counts even a little earlier, otherwise Albgis would not have sought refuge there when he eloped with Patrik's wife. Charged with the crime of adultery, Albgis, by order of the Synod of Mainz of 3 October 852, was sentenced to seven years in exile, fasting and a life without a woman and a military belt (*militari cingulo*).[70] Around 868 Carloman's vassal (*vassalus Carlmanni*) Gundakar offered his service to Rostislav. He died

64 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 112.
65 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 112.
66 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 113.
67 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 122; *Annales Alamannici*, MGH SS I, 53.
68 Bowlus 1973, 759–775.
69 Mitterauer 1963, 178–188.
70 *Capitularia regum Francorum II*, MGH Legum sectio II, 184–191, No 249.

later in a fight with Frankish troops.[71] Count Arbo had an excellent knowledge of Moravian affairs. His son Isanrik also knew the Moravians from close-up, for he in 882 sent to Svatopluk's court as hostage.[72]

Gundakar's connecting link with the Wilhelminers or Arbo was the administration of the Eastern (Pannonian) March, the name denoting the border possessions around the Danube neighbouring with the Mojmirid domain.[73] Oaths and pledges of fealty, however, remind us that the Carolingian kings viewed the Mojmirids as their counts. That the Moravian dukes became involved in imperial affairs and were invited to feast tables, is attested to by an older book of the Salzburg brotherhood with a record of Svatopluk and his wife (?) Svatosisna (*Zuuentibald. .uuengizigna*).[74] An additional entry in the Gospel, today found in Cividale, says the same, but apart from the Moravian ducal couple (*Szuentipulc, Szuentezizna*)[75] our attention should be directed to a record in which Svatopluk (*Santpulc*) stood alongside Count Liutpold.[76] Furthermore, the books of the brotherhood of the Saint Gall abbey includes Svatopluk's name as *Zundibold* among those faithful to Liutpold.[77]

But who did the writer have in mind? An unknown name-sake of the feared duke, Svatopluk himself, his son or his grandson? The individual records cannot be dated although a small cross drawn by the Benedictines near Liutpold's name suggests that the entry was made, or modified, in 907. An interesting clue is hidden in a document from Emperor Arnulf, who, on 31 August 898, at the request of Count Iring and Count Isangrin, presented Svatopluk, with selected properties in Carinthia to do with as he wished.[78] Five years later, on 26 September 903, Arnulf's successor Louis, on advice from Sigihard, Reginbert and again Isangrin, rewarded a man called Svatopluk, Liutpold's vassal, with possessions in Arbo's county.[79]

Both donations emphasise the receiver's relationship to Liutpold, which explains how and why Svatopluk's name appeared in Northern Italy and the Saint Gall books of the brotherhood. A document from 903, dictated by the notary Engilbert on behalf of the Salzburg metropolitan Theotmar, to whose court the intercessors, Counts Iring, Reginbert, Sigihard and Isangrin, belonged confirms

71 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 67–68.
72 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 111.
73 Mitterauer 1963, 175–178.
74 *Liber confraternitatum Salisburgiensis vetustior*, MGH Necrologia Germaniae II, 12, Col 30.
75 MMFH III, 292.
76 MMFH III, 293.
77 *Libri confraternitatum sancti Galli*, MGH Necrologia Germaniae, 94, Col 306.
78 *Arnolfi Diplomata*, MGH DGK III, 245–246, No 162.
79 *Ludowici infantis Diplomata*, MGH DGK IV, 135–137, No 27.

Svatopluk's personal relationship to Salzburg. Finally, Arnulf's privilege from 898 was verified by Chancellor Wiching, former bishop in Nitra and an opponent of Methodius, bringing us full circle back to the Mojmirids.

Let us admit that intentionally, as we have so far bypassed the Fulda chronicler who in 898 stated that Liutpold and Arbo, acting on Arnulf's order, intervened in the argument between Mojmir and Svatopluk, two brothers from the Moravians (*duos fratres gentis Marahensium*) and that the Bavarian troops hurried to the rescue of one of the parties. But it showed that the quarrel was instigated by Count Arbo, urged on by his son Isanrik, and due to this he temporarily lost the office entrusted to him (*praefectura sua*).[80] As of 899 our reporter added that the Bavarians had conquered the seat of the Moravians from where they took the boy Svatopluk with his retinue and that Isanrik ruled contrary to law and good manners (*tyrannidem*), until he was besieged in Mautern by the royal army. The treacherous count then fled to the Moravians and, with their support, gained imperial territory (*partem regni subripuit*).[81]

The story, recorded for posterity some trepidation, has both clarity and narrative tension. However, three other plots narrated complicate the sequence of events. It is not known if Arnulf dealt with the rebellious administrator of the Eastern March and only then sanctioned a campaign against Moravia, or if he first tried to settle the Moravian affairs and improved Isanrik's morals after a victorious return. Similarly, it is unclear why the Fulda chronicler described Svatopluk as Mojmir's equally matched rival and then as a boy (*puer*). However, the obvious weaknesses in the account do not invalidate the meaning of the commentary; it maintained a clear story line and attempted to clarify to the reader the history of the argument in a remote corner of the Frankish Empire. If we disregard an interlude describing the fall of Count Erimbert,[82] and a lament over the unsteady nature of Arbo's son Isanrik, there is nothing that prevents us from joining the two Moravian parts of the story into a single narrative and move it forward to the year 898. From there only a small step is required to the assumption that the document from 31 August 898 with which Arnulf presented the "majestic man from a noble family" (*vir progenie bonae nobilitatis exortus*) Svatopluk, indeed could have concerned a Mojmirid exile.

Such observations invite a re-examination of the fratricidal struggle and the last years of Mojmirid rule over the Central Danube region, as well as of the rather reserved attitude of the first of the Svatopluks towards Methodius and the Slavic liturgy. If Svatopluk's name was written in the Salzburg book of

80 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 131–132.
81 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 133.
82 *Annales Fuldenses*, MGH SRG [7.], 132.

brotherhood, he must have been considered an ally of the Salzburg metropolitan. We cannot rule out a sort of blood relationship, as the younger Svatopluk was freeded from prison by Count Liutpold, and taken into his service. It may have happened despite the protests and threats by Duke Mojmir II, who consequently became close to Isanrik and helped him gain control over the Eastern March[83] and to take his revenge on the archbishop he turned to Pope John IX in 899, asking him to send legates to Moravia who would introduce the Moravian metropolitan to his office.[84]

It is possible that clan-related commitments brought Liutpold with Theotmar as far as somewhere near Bratislava, where on 4 July 907 they fought and lost a battle with the Magyar cavalry. However, it was a whole generation of Bavarian leaders that shed their blood on the battlefield, resulting in the loss of Carolingian influence in the Central Danube region.[85] The event heralded the downfall of Moravia and the Eastern March,[86] as Carolingian administration retained a position back beyond the Enns river, in Traungau, Carinthia and around Salzburg, to where what was left of the once mighty dynasties withdrew.[87] The Wilhelmins re-emerged in the early 10th century in the service and under protection of the archbishop of Salzburg, and of the descendants of Count Arbo and Liutpold,[88] as recorded in a catalogue of documents. Along with them, a count (*comes*) named Mojmir and a nobleman (*nobilis vir*) named Svatopluk are also mentioned.[89]

Mojmir was held in great esteem and the archbishop acknowledged him as the first among his vassals, placing him before Engilbert and Reginbert, the influential governors of Salzburg and Chiemsee, where Mojmir sojourned in the spring and summer of 925[90] and in the spring of 927.[91] However, Mojmir had so far not been connected with a courtly or landed office or larger properties.[92] Uncertainty is further augmented by five records from the years 928 and 930,

83 That Isanrik could rely on Moravian assistance is suggested by the cemeteries in the hinterland of Mautern. Further in Sedlmayer 2013, 193–216.

84 MMFH III, 196–208, No 109.

85 Zehetmayer 2007, 17–29.

86 Herold 2007, 77–92.

87 Deutinger 2008, 58–70.

88 Mitterauer 1960, 711–712.

89 *Codex Odalberti*, 55–165.

90 *Codex Odalberti*, 72–73, No 5 (Chiemsee); 91–92, No 28 (Chiemsee); 111–112, No 48 (Chiemsee); 120–121, No 59 (Salzburg); 125–126, No 63 (Salzburg); 163–164, No 101 (Salzburg).

91 *Codex Odalberti*, 108–109, No 45 (Salzburg); 109–110, No 46 (Salzburg); 110–111, No 47 (Salzburg); 153–154, No 90 (Salzburg).

92 Mitterauer 1960, 705.

in which Mojmir appears as a less significant witness.[93] From there comes the question of whether he lost the favour of the metropolitan and was ordered to leave the court, and maybe even the surroundings of Salzburg, or whether he died and his son (?) took up a position adequate to his age and experience? Unfortunately, we do not know as Odalbert's codex does not offer more than a few lines which attest that Svatopluk stood alongside Mojmir.

A total of seven testimonies three from 925[94] and four from 927,[95] are connected by Salzburg, where negotiations took place. After all, the same idea results from an agreement of 14 February 932, in which Svatopluk, on behalf of himself and his father Diotmar (*cum manu patris sui Diotmari*), surrendered selected properties to the archbishop of Salzburg in exchange for lifelong rights to possessions he currently held as a fief.[96] Two years later, Svatopluk renounced to the benefit of the metropolitan the property (*proprietatem*) that his father Diotmar had once acquired from Count Kerho, and received in return everything that has once been owned by a certain Mildrud.[97]

The mysterious Mildrud is generally assumed to be Svatopluk's mother,[98] and as the fatherly rights fell to Diotmar, we are left with no alternative but think within the dimensions of the clan structures which, at the end of the Carolingian era, were deeply interwoven throughout the whole of the eastern part of Bavaria. Count Kerho linked Svatopluk with the influential Carinthian family of Count Witigo, Diotmar was related to the Salzburg archbishop Theotmar and Mildrud probably belonged to the wider circle of relatives of Count Liutpold and King Arnulf.[99]

4.3 Conclusion

Let us attempt to summarise what happened around the year 900 on the eastern edge of the Carolingian world. Starting in 898, when East-Frankish King Arnulf intervened in the Moravian discord. Since the brotherly disputations were clearly not destined to end in reconciliation, Svatopluk sought protection

93 *Codex Odalberti*, 78–79, No 12 (928); 138–139, No 77 (928); 136–138, No 76 (930); 140–141, No 79 (930); 141–142, No 80 (930).

94 *Codex Odalberti*, 120–121, No 59; 125–126, No 63; 163–164, No 101.

95 *Codex Odalberti*, 88–89, No 24; 108–109, No 45; 153–154, No 90 and probably also 100, No 38.

96 *Codex Odalberti*, 151–152, No 88.

97 *Codex Odalberti*, 157–158, No 94.

98 *Codex Odalberti*, 157.

99 Further relationships indicated in Dopsch 1971, 95–123.

from Count Liutpold and the Salzburg archbishop Theotmar and between 898 and 903, both provided him with adequate funding. We cannot rule out the possibility that Theotmar became godfather to Svatopluk's son, who then accepted and bore the archbishop's name (in the form of Diotmar). Svatopluk's hereditary rights may have been defended in the summer of 907 by his Bavarian kin. At roughly the same time the fate of Duke Mojmir was sealed, and his son by the same name appears as a vassal of the archbishop of Salzburg between 925 and 928.

If one discards a recently advanced hypothesis, according to which the Mojmirids took refuge in the lands to the north from the Moravian Gate, and participated in the rise of the birth of the Piast state,[100] one is on much firmer ground when considering that kinship bonds in eastern Bavaria, Carinthia and Salzburg, formed a reliable network that provided the foundation for the survival of the Moravian ducal family. In addition, the dating of the second church at Pohansko does not exclude the possibility[101] that they could claim the family heritage; in the widely branched out clan structures there must have been individuals who would try their fortune on home turf.[102]

Regardless of whether someone was invoking Mojmirid traditions, or only tried to live through hard times in a farmstead in the suburb, there are no doubts that in the 9th and the early 10th century the Central Danube basin was a space for the meeting and intermingling of ideas between Bavarians and Moravians. The Mojmirids acted as hereditary governors for a kind of march on the eastern edge of the Frankish Empire; they were sworn by an oath of fealty and although they occasionally obtained greater freedom through periods of defiance, they never broke the ties with their western neighbours. Inother words, the Moravian dukes may have broken their given word, but not blood relationship the importance of which is underlined by the unfortunate events around 900.

Even when one chooses to regard Moravia as a loose part of the Carolingian Empire – interconnected by blood ties and political alliances with the Carolingian Eastern March (*Baierisches Ostland*),[103] one still needs to answer the difficult question of was actually that that the Mojmirids ruled over – an early state[104] or a cyclical chiefdom.[105] And one cannot avoid wondering

100 Sikorski 2013, 183–203.
101 Macháček 2014, 263–280.
102 More on this in the contribution by Jiří Macháček in this book.
103 Diesenberger 2007, 31–43.
104 Štefan 2014, 141–173.
105 Macháček 2012, 775–787.

whether the debate itself is a return to the search for age-old national and state roots. Certainly, shared values cannot be mistaken for sameness or being identical and the Moravians could have been connected with the Frankish Empire in matters of power, and perhaps culturally, but not at the full social level, as Moravian society was only beginning to emulate the social structures of the European West. On the one hand the Moravians were capable of building densely populated settlements, protecting trade routes with market places, accepting baptism, successfully entering communication with the Holy See, entrusting public affairs to the assembly and appointing as their heads dukes from a single family, but on the other hand they had no coinage and political power was most likely based on the distribution of the status symbols from the centre to the periphery.[106]

Critics will no doubt seek the elimination of the misleading attributes which had made Mojmirid Moravia "a realm shining with gold" and "a subject in international law." Nationalist overtones have rendered suspect any statement regarding the political circumstances on the northern bank of the Danube during the early Middle Ages. Even the well-established name of Great Moravia had to be abandoned as a supposed instrument of exaggerating the historic legacy of the Moravians,[107] and the very location of Moravia on the map of the Central Danube region was to be abandoned in favour of Bosnia – all in the name of purging research from any nationalist overtones.[108] However, once one sheds off all such overtones, as well as exaggerated claims about Mojmirid Moravia shaping the political arrangements on the eastern frontier of the Frankish Empire,[109] one is forced to acknowledge that the second life of the Mojmirids did not just have a mythical-moral dimension. Much like, but a greater degree than Anglo-Saxon England, the Moravians were directly related to the Carolingian counts in the eastern part of Bavaria, in particular in Pannonia and Carinthia. In the 9th century, those counts exercised authority over Slavic family clans that in many respects were not unlike the Mojmirids.

106 Possible consequences pointed out in Kouřil 2004, 55–74.
107 Dopsch 1985, 5–28.
108 Macháček 2009, 248–267.
109 Třeštík 1999, 689–725.

CHAPTER 5

Graves, Churches, Culture and Texts: The Processes of Christianisation in the Early Middle Ages and Their Social and Cultural Context

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The discovery of the grave of an unknown man in the stronghold at Pohansko (South Moravia, Czech Republic), a man who very likely belonged to the contemporary elites and was a Christian, unavoidably raises the question of what the significance of Christianisation in the life of the early medieval elite really was and whether the bond with Christianity was a valuable asset or, conversely, a hidden threat.[1] If we want to discuss the influence of the Christian church on early medieval communities and their elites in particular, we need to start by considering what Christianisation really represented, how important it was and what could have been expected from it and, above all, what its implications were at the level of the dukes and among the elites as a whole. Answers to all these questions cannot be gleaned from documents attached to the history of ninth-century Moravia, which was then emerging for the first time as an independent entity in the historical sources, albeit within boundaries not completely identical to those of today's Moravia. In our considerations we will therefore rely on evidence from other periods and regions as well. Any comparison, however, entails the potential danger that we will automatically accept local customs and processes as proofs of some general trends. While admittedly the regional differences were substantial, we will approach these documents not as pieces of hard evidence that will enable us to assemble a clear mosaic, but rather as flashes, reflections in the mirror, which suggest possible alternatives.

1 The text has been made possible thanks to the support from the GAČR 15-22658S grant project, The Role of Centres in Transitional Society on Examples from Early Medieval Moravia and Silesia.

 | DOI:10.1163/9789004392878_006

5.1 Christianisation: The Risks, Benefits and Consequences Involved

What is Christianisation and how did it happen?[2] In early medieval sources Christianisation, in the sense of adopting Christian faith and dogma, is quite often linked with a decision of the ruler.[3] But we should approach this evidence with caution – most of the documents were written *ex post* in an effort to connect the conversion with a charismatic missionary (and no-less charismatic prince). As a rule, this remarkable figure was also considered to be the founder of important bishoprics and monasteries, where the legends were subsequently conceived.[4] Other contemporary sources inform us, however, that it was quite the reverse and Christianisation slipped in surreptitiously step by step as missionaries succeeded in winning the support of individual members of the elite.[5]

The ruler himself, for whom the adoption of Christianity was a risky move both from a personal point of view[6] and from the aspect of power and politics, might wait and decide in favour of conversion under a more suitable political

2 Higham 1997. The more recent work Bruno Dumézil, Les racines chrétiennes de l´Europe. Conversion et liberté dans les roayaumes barbares Ve–VIIIe siècle, 2005 was not at my disposal.

3 Gregorius Turonensis, Chronica, MGH SRM 1.1, II. 29–31, 74–78. Cf. Heinzelmann 1994; on the issue of Christianization and Clovis's alleged baptism, critically Wood 1994, 44–50; Wood 1985. Regarding St. Olaf, cf. at least Jiroušková 2014. In the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms e.g. Beda, Historia ecclesiastica, II. 14, 113–115. In the Czech lands Legenda Christiani 1978, c. 2, 18–20. The traditional narrative is accepted e.g. in Berend, ed. 2006.

4 Cf. for Bavaria with a critical distance towards hagiographic sources Couser 2010; another example is Beda's version of the Christianization of England ignoring the fact that the Celtic majority of the population was already Christian.

5 Indirect testimony is The Russian Primary Chronicle 1953, 76 and 86; similar cases are also known from the West. The fact that premature distinguishing between the Christian and the pagan could considerably distort our further reflections was pointed out, in a witty way, by Carver 2010, 8–9 "Burial is not in itself ethnic but it does in fact signal identity; burials are not intrinsically pagan or Christian but they do in fact reflect belief. If they do not, there would be very little point in studying them. All the hand-writing that goes about paganism and Christianity is predicated on the mistaken idea that these are unique and unitary intellectual positions. Once we realize that a grave simply reports what people were thinking, our object then becomes to interpret as best as we can the particularities of ideology and allegiance being expressed."

6 Cf. note 33.

constellation.[7] The story of an assembly held by the King of Northumbria who called in the magnates to discuss whether to accept baptism does not come as a surprise.[8]

One of the rewards of this risk was the special protection and legitimacy that the church could provide to rulers. It is much more than receiving a royal anointment which, after all, appeared relatively late in the sources,[9] while the alleged anointing of Pippin III, a Frankish *majordomus* from the Carolingian dynasty, is notoriously dubious and based on relatively late sources.[10] More anointments were still made at least in the ninth century, especially in moments of crisis, and not regularly.[11] However, the church would offer protection to the rulers even without it, as it pushed forward the idea that the ruler, being a person entrusted with rule by God, enjoys special protection and any crime against him would be comparable with the treason of Judas.[12]

The boundary between "paganism" and "Christianity" was often blurred and barely visible. As Christianity was slowly taking root in society there was an increasing struggle to ascertain that church norms were not just superficially followed but that they would become a firm part of the world of believers as only strict observation of allegedly age-old norms were then imagined in the minds of the people as ensuring salvation. This was accompanied by developing a more detailed and perfected image of the enemy – paganism – which very likely never existed as a system.[13] Vagueness required clarification and, as a result, in different environments we run into catalogues of questions and answers which were to explain difficult points in the newly adopted faith to

7 A "pagan" response appears to be almost a system phenomenon e.g. in central and northern Europe, cf. Kalhous 2011, 679–680. Cf. on the issue of the incorporation of Christianization into the political strategy of early medieval princes Higham 1997, 90–92, 96–103 who also demonstrates that the papacy was well aware of the fact that missionaries would observe goals different from those of the king.

8 Beda, Historia ecclesiastica, II. 13, 111–113.

9 Iulianus Toledanensis, Historia Wambae regis, MGH SRM 5, c. 4, 503–504. Apart from Julian, royal anointments are mentioned e.g. by the Protocol of the Twelfth Council of Toledo, cf. Concilium toletanum duodecimum 1850, § 1, 454–455. (A more recent edition of Vidas was not available.) For more on this, see at least Enright 1985, 81–84.

10 Cf. Semmler 2003; Diesenberger, Reimitz 2005, 214–269; Annales regni Francorum, MGH SRG 6, AD 751, 5–6. The Merovingian kingdom already had deep Christian roots, cf. Hen 2004.

11 This was pointed out by Nelson 1986. The very first coronation order was written for the coronation of Charles the Bald who became the King of Lorraine in 869.

12 Cf. První staroslověnská legenda o sv. Václavu (charvátohlaholská redakce), 1929, 38; Hohenaltheim, MGH Conc. 6/1, § 19, 28.

13 Comp. note 92 specifying ecclesiastic legislation regarding customs connected with burials.

neophytes, i.e. those freshly baptised, (or alternatively their shepherds), in particular concerning nourishment, the observation of feasts and weddings.[14]

Sometimes it is surprising what the church was willing to tolerate. Traditionally, archaeologists link Christianisation with the abandoning of funerary customs which entailed the depositing of grave goods. But nothing could be further from the truth: the church did not reprimand these funerary customs in the least, as initially it was not interested in their "Christianisation" and their disappearance relates to completely different social changes.[15] The stipulations of the *Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae*, which forbade the burning of bodies and their placement outside Christian cemeteries in pagan mounds, are an exception.[16] But even here another explanation is viable: rather than an interest of the church in eradicating paganism, Bonnie Effros sees this effort of Charlemagne as an attempt by the Carolingian kingdom to uproot traditional tribal structures, where identification with the local cults may have played an important role in forming their identity.[17] This hypothesis would equally well explain why similar customs within the territory of the Frankish Empire had earlier been ignored by the church.[18] These customs did not have the potential to awaken resistance to the empire, so the church did not engage itself in this field in order to eradicate them. On the contrary, sources often provide evidence that society, including the church, protected "their" dead and their graves and vaults.[19] The modifications in the funerary rite took place primarily due to social changes (changes in the representation of the elites), not as a result of pressure by church legislation.

The previous example illustrates how political and the religious matters were interwoven in that period, if they were separated at all.[20] Evidence of this is plentiful. If we look at Kent, one of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in south-east England at the turn of the 6th and the 7th century, we will see how much moves by King Æthelbert († 616) were determined by changes in the political situation on the continent: while marriage to princess Bertha introduced him to the court of Frankish King Chilperich and also brought about the arrival of her chaplain, Bishop Liudhard, the death of Chilperich in 684

14 Beda, Historia ecclesiastica, I. 27, 48–62; Nicolaus I, Epistolae, MGH EE 6, No. 99, 568–600; cf. Mayr-Harting 1994.

15 Although grave goods could sometimes define Christian identity, cf. Innes 2000, 35–37.

16 Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae, MGH Leges 2, Capitularia 1, No. 26, p. 69, but cf. Cosmas, Chronica, II. 4, 88.

17 Cf. Effros 1997.

18 Effros 1997, 279.

19 Evidence was collected by Effros 2002, 41–78.

20 Cf. e.g. de Jong 2009; Patzold 2009.

and the strengthening of the position of his brother, Frankish King Childebert, resulted in the intensification of links to his court, which was reflected in church politics:[21] soon afterwards Augustine's mission became the subject of correspondence between the Pope and Frankish kings Theuderich II and Theudebert II.[22]

The example of the Avars and the Slavs showed to what extent baptism and subjugation intermingled in the practices of the Carolingian Empire, and simultaneously highlighted the frequent friction surfaces between traditional "political" strategies and attitudes springing from a religious background.[23] It is therefore not surprising that the Bavarian dukes, in collaboration with the pope and St. Boniface – Winfrieth, strove to establish a metropolis which would tie them more closely to Rome and make them less dependent on the Frankish clergy and empire.[24] The baptism of 14 dukes from Bohemia in 845 at the court of Louis the German in Regensburg follows the same logic and can be viewed as an effort by those leaders to appease the aggressive policy of the Franks. The baffled Louis the German then responded very flexibly and regardless of the unsuitable date made the necessary provisions for the baptism.[25] And by the way, we should not forget that alliances between rulers could be forged through godparenthood.[26]

Just as external pressure impacted Æthelbert's politics, Æthelbert himself was not reluctant to use the missions sent from Rome for his own internal political purposes. At the beginning of the seventh century, thanks to his influence in the south of England, he pushed through the proposal that rulers from the surrounding territories send a representative of the Celtic clergy to a meeting with the Roman missionary Augustine, who was active in Kent under the king's patronage: however, Augustine failed this test of "strength".[27] Æthelbert intended to deploy Augustine as his mediator, who would enable him, by subjugating the British priests, to strengthen his influence even outside the territory of the Kingdom of Kent, although he paradoxically did not use Augustine to Christianise other regions which respected his power (Wessex).[28] Another valuable benefit of the mission was unification of the cult throughout the whole territory of the kingdom, which provided the kingdom with a much

21 Higham 1997, 66–73, 86–90.
22 Gregorius I, Epistolae, MGH EE 1. 2, IX. 47, 319–320.
23 Reimitz 2001, 189, 198–201, 205–207.
24 S. Bonifatius et Lullus, Epistolae, MGH EE Sel. 1, No. 45, p. 72.
25 Třeštík 1995 [1997], 7–59. On possible confusion in dating Reimitz 2001, 205, note 77.
26 Angenendt 1984.
27 Beda, Historia ecclesiastica, II. 2, 81–85; Higham 1997, 103–113, 114–115.
28 Higham 1997, 112–113.

firmer, united and clearly defined framework.[29] Even Bede did not hesitate to link the adoption of the new religion with the prosperity of the whole land.[30]

But the fates of the early christian Anglo-Saxon who found death under the swords of the "pagans" indicate that the imagined natural and successful progress of **adoption of baptism – elimination of tribal structures – building a monarchic rule** did not always work perfectly. Contemporary rulers were well aware of that and not all of them joyfully went to meet the missionaries with the aim of being baptised (and building a "state"): Æthelbert's son Eadbald did not accept baptism during his father's lifetime, and for many of his other contemporaries baptism was not attractive for a long time. In addition, even when baptism of the ruler did take place, there was always a lurking danger of a "pagan reaction" which very quickly overturned everything which had been achieved with great effort in terms of the clergy and the duke's power: this is supported by plentiful evidence from Central Europe.[31]

Resistance to the new faith could also have been fanned by fear of being separated from one's own family, being the fundamental structure for every individual at that time.[32] Adopting the new faith meant renunciation of everything except faith in the new God. Not everybody was willing to offer such a sacrifice: if we are to believe eighth-century hagiographers in *The Life of Saint Wulfram of Sens*, we encounter the account of the Frisian duke Radbod, who was already standing with one foot in the baptismal tub, but when he learned that he would share heaven with strangers, while his ancestors would suffer the torments of hell, he opted for rejection in the company of the people close to him rather than staying in paradise, but next to strangers, who were poor and not of noble birth.[33] The existence of similar ideas is also proven by the prohibition of attempts coming from the opposite side to subsequently sanctify pagan ancestors by their interment in a church.[34]

5.2 Great Moravia and Christianity

The population of Moravia likely encountered Christianity several decades before we are informed about it in written sources. It would is highly improbable

29 Higham 1997, 117.

30 Beda, Historia ecclesiastica, II. 16, 118.

31 Cf. note 7.

32 Legenda Christiani 1978, c. 2, 20.

33 Vita Vulframni, MGH SRM 5, c. 9, 668. Cf. Geary 1994, 35–36.

34 Theodorus, Poenitentiale, 190–191. Cf. Hinkmar von Reims, Collectio de Ecclesiis et Capellis, 81 where it is forbidden to erect churches above dead bodies.

that the inhabitants of the region of what is today Moravia had never encountered Christianity, being a border area with the Avar Khaganate, which maintained lively contacts with the Christian Bavaria and through it probably with North Italy as well as Byzantium.[35] Nevertheless, we have no direct evidence of an organised mission, just as there is a lack of clear evidence of a mission not sent by one of the bishoprics or important monasteries – excepting a single report in the legend of the Maastricht bishop St. Amand (†675), written in the second half of the eighth century at the latest, but it is very indefinite as far as the location of the saint's activity is concerned.[36] In the 1960s the church historian and archaeologist Josef Cibulka made an attempt to link the newly discovered church in Modrá near Staré Město in South Moravia with the activity of Irish missionaries, but the indications he supported his theory with (church floor plan) were rightfully regarded by other researchers as too weak.[37]

It is quite certain that Christian doctrine did not penetrate the region of the future Moravian duchy from a single source only – the evidence is provided here mainly by the floor plans of the church buildings, which, as we expect, reflect the influence of different cultural environments.[38] Another indication is undoubtedly the report about the *Life of Methodius*, whose author reminds us of the presence of "teacher-priests from Italy, as well as Greece and Germany."[39] Regardless of where the missionaries came from, they strove to get a good understanding of the local language, which was a prerequisite for successfully addressing the local people.[40]

In the first half of the ninth century the key role was most probably played by missionaries sent by the bishop of Passau or those arriving from the region

35 On the relations between the Khaganate and Bavaria on which the accusation of Tassilo III was based, and on the Tassilo trial, cf. Becher 1993.

36 Vita Amandi, MGH SRM 5, c. 16, 439–440. For more about him see Wood 1994, 191; Wood 2001, 39–42 which also points out that the oldest fragment of the text is probably related to the activities of Salzburg Bishop Arno.

37 Cibulka 1958. Cf. a review by Graus 1959.

38 On areas from which Christianity could have spread to Great Moravia cf. Vavřínek 1963a; Vavřínek 1963b.

39 Žitije Mefodija, MMFH 2, 145.

40 Cf. von Padberg 1995, 140–146. Beda, Historia ecclesiastica, I. 25, 45 mentions that Roman missionaries employed Frank interpreters. The intertwining of the educated Greek and Latin culture and vernacular culture was manifested e.g. in the Bohemian milieu of the 10th–11th centuries, through translations from Latin into Old Church Slavonic, or through manuscript notes in the native language, cf. basic information in Kalhous 2012, 208–237. For that matter, according to Beda even Ecgberth, King of Kent, sent Wigheard to Rome for archbishop's consecration so that himself and his people would learn the Gospels in their own language, see Beda Venerabilis, Historia abbatum, c. 3, 366.

of Dalmatia and Aquileia. The beginning of the first phase of Christianisation when the missionaries succeeded in persuading at least a part of the local elites was marked by the year 831, in which later sources of Passau origin record "the baptism of all Moravians".[41] It was around that period that the Bavarian episcopate took a greater interest in the territories of today's Moravia and Slovakia, otherwise there would be no reconciliation in 829 between the Passau bishop Reginhar and his Salzburg metropolitan regarding the boundaries of missionary activities when the Passau bishopric was assigned the region north of the Danube as far the Rába river.[42] And finally, in the same period[43] the Salzburg archbishop Adalram arrived in Nitra to consecrate a church built by Pribina, then still a pagan, who at that time married a woman from the influential Bavarian family of the Wilhelminers. As she was naturally a Christian, historiography considered it very likely that her husband received baptism over time.[44] We cannot, however, make a categorical judgement regarding this matter as to whether or not it was a requirement: apart from stories which illustrated a purposeful effort by humiliating the "barbarian" elites to make them accept baptism,[45] we have evidence of problem-free communication between "pagans" and Christians, where the more important role was played by social status, rather than religion.

More than thirty years after the "baptism of the Moravians" we hear almost nothing about religious activities in Moravia. The situation does not change until the beginning of the 860s, when the Duke of the Moravians, Rostislav (846–870), approached Rome, and Constantinople, probably with the aim of requesting that an ecclesiastical organisation be established. Although *The Lives* of Constantine and Methodius mention that he pleaded for a teacher to be sent, Rostislav's motive of being able to attain bishopric and archbishopric can hardly be challenged.[46]

Nevertheless, Rostislav did not succeed with the Holy See, and the imperial court in Constantinople, which in the end answered his plea, did not respect the wish of the Moravian duke completely either: the missionaries they sent, in

41 Albert Behaim, Descriptio gentium et diversarum nationum Europe, 504. Cf. Třeštík 2001, 114–122, esp. 117–119.

42 Diplomata Ludowici Germani, MGH DD ex stirpe Karolinorum I, No. 173, 245. On the credibility of this report comp. Lechner 1969.

43 The fact that Nitra was not administered by the Passau bishopric is indicated by CDB I, No. 30, p. 31. Cf. Labuda 1988, 140–142; similarly Třeštík 2001, 115–117.

44 Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum 1979, c. 11, p. 52.

45 Conversio Bagoariorum et Carantanorum, c. 7, p. 46; Legenda Christiani 1978, c. 2, 18. Cf. Cibulka 1965, 65–72; on the creation of barriers between Christians and the non-baptised Reimitz 2001, 203–204. On Conversio see an extensive treatise by Wolfram 1995.

46 Cf. on the history of this mission Vavřínek 2013; Betti 2014; Marsina 1985a; Marsina 1985b.

particular the brothers Constantine and Methodius, may have been top-class scholars and experienced administrators, but they did not have higher consecration by the church and as such could only undertake the role of teachers. Given the magnitude of episcopal responsibility this is not as surprising as it may seem and the procedure of the imperial court was fully in line with the practice that the Pope followed himself – a missionary was required to prove his credibility before he could receive episcopal consecration.[47]

Another reason why it should not be a surprise was the fact that Constantine proposed a controversial programme of the widespread application of the local language in the church – while the usage of local tongues was a common practice in preaching and in contemporary writing and was naturally tolerated, and even promoted,[48] in the *Life of Constantine*, the zealously defended effort[49] to introduce Old Church Slavonic as the liturgical language met with strong opposition even in its time – probably as a response of Bavarian episcopate on Methodius' and papal legal claims on Moravian territory.[50] Consequently, there was no reasonable hope that a consensual policy would make it possible in the future to unify the different groups of priests active within Moravian territory. After two and a half years the brothers decided to leave Moravia and return home and chose to travel via Venice. There they were reached by Pope's messengers with an invitation to Rome –, the reason for this was likely that Constantine had in his possession the alleged remains of one of the first Popes, Saint Clement rather as a result of their successful missionary work.[51]

47 Betti 2014, 168–183.

48 Cf. the reply of Pope Gregory VII to Duke Vratislaus II of 2 January 1080 in: Gregorius VII., Epistolae, MGH EE Sel. 2. 2, VII. 11, 474.

49 Cf. on Constantine's exceptionality, also in the context of the Byzantine mission, Vavřínek 2013; Ivanov 2015.

50 The defence and legitimization of Constantine's legacy in his biography is apparent, comp. e.g. disputations with people who defended the use of only three languages in the liturgy in Žitije Konstantina, MMFH 2, c. 16, 105–110; more on this Vavřínek 1963. Resistance to this programme appears paradoxical, as similar reflections were probably not unfamiliar in the Frankish environment either, otherwise it can be hardly explained why the Synod of Frankfurt in 794 condemned anybody who would support the legitimacy of just three liturgical languages, Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Cf. at the same time, even in the Frankish environment there were efforts, ca 800, to use local languages in liturgy: a decree of the Synod of Frankfurt from 794 meant the condemnation of those who believed that the Lord was to be praised in three languages only, cf. Concilium Franconofurtense a. 794, in: Concilia aevi Karolini, 1.1. MGH LL Concilia II.1, c. 52, 171: „Ut nullus credat, quod nonnisi in tribus linguis Deus orandus sit, quia in omni Lingua Deus adoratur et homo exauditur, si iusta petierit." This provision was previously noted by V. Konzal.

51 On the discovery of the relics Žitije Konstantina, MMFH 2, c. 4, p. 67. Ibid., c. 17, p. 110 on the welcoming of the relics in Rome. Cf. also Vita Constantini, MMFH 2, c. 4–5, 125–127.

Unfortunately, these first contacts between the two brothers and the Pope are only confirmed in *The Lives*.[52] We do not know how their visit was reflected upon by the Pope himself – *Liber pontificalis* completely ignores any relationship with Moravia,[53] nevertheless the frescoes in the Basilica of Saint Clement from the eleventh century prove the longevity of the tradition linked with the visit of the two missionaries. We can thus expect that both brothers made a good impression in Rome as Methodius finally achieved being consecrated a bishop which was followed by his appointment as archbishop of Moravia.[54] Let us leave aside whether this was a calculation by the clever Byzantine, who took advantage of the opportunity without having strong local support,[55] or a work worthy of a statesman in collaboration with the local leaders in Pannonia.[56]

However, these successes did not ensure peace for Methodius and his supporters – if we disregard imprisonment in one of the Swabian monasteries in connection with a radical change in power in Moravia around 870 and short-lived Frankish rule in Moravia, Methodius probably competed with priests from Frankish empire for influence in the ducal court and in the land. This conflict was personified by Wiching, who Methodius was forced to endure as bishop in Nitra, his suffragan, with whom he contested for the rest of his life whether before the Holy See or in the court of Svatopluk.[57] But after the death of Methodius even Wiching did not stay in Moravia too long – instead he decided in favour of the court of Emperor Arnulf, who awarded him the Episcopal See in Passau from which he was justifiably removed by the unsatisfied co-bishops.

5.3 The Fall of Great Moravia and the Disruption of the Moravian See?

An attempt to re-establish a higher ecclesiastical organisation in Moravia took place around the year 900, and ensues from a negative imprint of those events in a letter of complaint by the Salzburg archbishop Theotmar and his suffragans.[58] In the document they protested against the violating of the

52 Žitije Konstantina, MMFH 2, c. 17, 110–112; Žitije Mefodija, MMFH 2, c. 6–10, 146–150; Vita Constantini, MMFH 2, c. 8–11, 129–132.

53 This is recently pointed out by Betti 2014, 42, 43.

54 Cf. more recently Jan 2011 summarizing the author's earlier works, or Kalhous 2009; Betti 2014, 138–203.

55 Třeštík 1997, 277–285; Marsina 1985a.

56 Most recently Vavřínek 2013; Jan 2011.

57 Cf. e.g. Codex diplomaticus Slovaciae, 1, No. 36, p. 30. Among earlier works, I consider the study Laehr 1928 to be the most convincing. The text of this papal letter is only preserved in the eleventh century copy inserted in Prague in tenth-century ms. Heiligenkreuz 217.

58 CDB I, No. 30, 29–33. On its authenticity Třeštík 1998.

boundaries of their diocese and on that occasion they mentioned that the curia should send their legates, Archbishop John and bishops Benedict and Daniel.[59]

Nobody could have suspected at that time the end of the Mojmirid rule in Moravia was drawing near: After all, as late as 905 the Moravians successfully fended off a Magyar raid.[60] The definitive end came a little later and was marked by the defeat of the Bavarian troops in the battle of *Brezalauspurk* (*Pressburg*), in which the cream of Bavarian society met their deaths, including count Liutpold.[61] But we cannot say it was the complete end of Moravia: its name did not vanish and re-emerged in the sources with greater frequency from the beginning of the eleventh century,[62] and maybe the local dynasties did not die out either,[63] and most likely even the remains of Moravian church organisation survived: as of 976 we hear of a Moravian bishop attending the judicial court held by archbishop of Mainz and we cannot rule out that he was not the only bishop active in Moravia in the tenth century.[64]

5.4 Local Churches in Early Medieval Europe

Although, understandably, the history of missions and the founding of bishoprics and monasteries cannot be disregarded, we should not be blinded by the splendour of the episcopal cathedrals and abbey churches. In other words, attention tends to be concentrated on the most important ecclesiastical institutions and their interlinking with the top echelons of power. But the lowest levels of church administration have too often continued to be primarily approached from the perspective of the concept of so-called proprietary churches[65] and, as a

59 CDB I, No. 30, p. 30.

60 Chronicon Suevicum universale, MGH SS 13, 66. Towards the chronology of the Fall of Great Moravia cf. Třeštík 1987.

61 This battle continues to stir up controversy, cf. Zehetmayer, ed. 2007; Štefanovičová/Hulínek, ed. 2008; Hiestand 1994.

62 Thietmar Merseburgensis, Chronica, MGH SRG N. S. 9, VII. 57 (42), 470.

63 Cf. a more recent contribution by Martin Wihoda in this book and possibly earlier works Mitterauer 1960; Dopsch 1971, 108–110, 121. I would like to thank Jiří Macháček for the references and for sending me the papers.

64 Jan 2003; Třeštík 2003; Kalhous 2012, 145–157; Kalhous (forthcomming).

65 The term "proprietary church" was defined by the legal historian Ulrich Stutz and further elaborated on especially by Hans Erich Feine and Hans Felix Schmid. Stutz thought that one of the essential elements which influenced the development of medieval church was the original Germanic custom of venerating various household gods, for which the fathers of families later built various shrines and other cult places of worship. These are said to

result, the local priests have only been viewed as servants to a particular magnate without a valid relationship to the local community, let alone to the competent bishop. However, without these lowest ranks of church administration, without the common clergy, which provided for the salvation of the villagers and which forced them to repeatedly perform the most necessary acts within the church, the efforts of the great kings to unify the territories they ruled over under a single cult would not have made much sense.

At the basis of the idea of proprietary churches and the dependence of the priests on earthly lords is a negative imprint of several contemporary reports. The contemporary legislation forbade "having for oneself a priest or a deacon or (another) cleric or to appoint him for one's church without permission by the bishop and without being examined by the bishop so that the bishop would know whether the candidate could be designated a cleric or a priest".[66] However, we are not aware how often it was that the magnates kept these clerics. The only piece of evidence in this respect is the complaints by some reformers. For example, Agobard from Lyon (ca 779–840) mentions the bad habit among laymen of keeping a priest with them, not because they would listen to the priests but to require their obeisance in all respects.[67] A similar lament came from Agobard's contemporary Jonas of Orléans (ca 760–843), another important scholar and ecclesiastical dignitary of the Carolingian era, who in his work alludes to priests as servants to laymen.[68]

This evidence was considered so serious that it led Ulrich Stutz to formulate his concept of the "Eigenkirche", a "proprietary church" which should have been a typical Germanic institution.[69] While the latest research regards Stutz's ideas as being more of a relative nature, it does not question the notion of the ownership of churches as such – rather it transposes this idea from the framework of ethnically linked legal systems, where the "proprietary churches" were taken as purely Germanic institutions and viewed as churches outside

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have remained, together with the complete equipment, in the possession of the family. The owners allegedly had a right to collect contributions from other visitors to the shrine. The above-mentioned custom should have survived after the adoption of Christianity and the priests working in the churches that should have replaced former pagan shrines were to have the status of mere servants of their lords. Cf. Stutz 1895, 89–153. See also further in the text.

66 Cf. Capitula de examinandis ecclesiasticis, in: MGH Capit. 1, No. 38, c. 12, 110; Capitulare ecclesiasticum, in: MGH Capit. 1, No. 138, c. 9, 277. More on this Patzold 2015, 231–233.

67 Agobard von Lyon, Epistolae, MGH EE 5, No. 11, c. 11, 203–204.

68 Jonas de Orléans, De institutione laicali, Patrologia Latina 106, c. 20, col. 208–211, esp. 209.

69 Stutz 1964. Cf. note 65. On his criticism cf. also Patzold 2007, 225–245. Czech medieval historians adopted a more balanced concept of the so-called ownership rights, cf. Vaněček 1933–1939; regarding Moravia more recently Borovský 2005.

the competence of the bishop, to the framework of practices and attitudes or approaches which were common throughout the whole of early medieval Europe. It also shows that the role of churches and their administrators is not fully explained by this concept and it is made clear that we should see them as a product of interaction between different functions, claims and needs they were expected to fulfil (property, pastoral work and ecclesiastical hierarchy).[70] It is therefore important to note that only bishops could be full owners of churches, as they had authority over them including within the church hierarchy, while the others only exercised some of their ownership rights, whether quite formal or real ones yielding an income, but the church as a whole did not belong to them. The bishops did manage to get hold of a considerable number of village shrines in the "barbarian" kingdoms; while at the same time new churches were built, which gradually obtained traditional parish rights (burial, baptism and mass).[71] But the situation was different from case to case; one church might have been attained by the bishop, another could have been furnished by a member of the secular elite, for whom it was just one property out of many, and still another could have arisen from an initiative of the local community, or it could have become the property of a family in which the priesthood was passed on from generation to generation. Most of the time the above alternatives were further combined, which might have led to very complicated legal situations (a powerful magnate presented the church as a gift, but in the meantime the church received presents from his subjects, reservation of part of the income during a lifetime, etc.).[72]

Even when viewed through the prism of the "Eigenkirche" concept, the local church was much more than just a matter of ownership rights. Keeping the continuity (and social status) of the family was not easy in the Early Middle Ages and church buildings and an endowment in this field were likely essential in this respect. On the one hand, it was a place where a memory of the deceased family members was retained, on the other hand the church could serve as the central point of a family burial site, or directly as a space where a crypt would be situated, and a place where records were kept which made it easier to keep track of the relatives. Finally, the church as the centre of the family endowment could play an important role as shared and easily identifiable family property. This was not restricted only to the level of smaller local

70 Wood 2006, 100, 739. For the important role of the bishops and their exclusive right to consecrate the churches, or new priests as key tool in control of the see cf. Esders/Miearau 2000.

71 Wood 2006, 67–79.

72 Wood 2006, 444–457.

churches but it also included bishoprics which had become attractive for the members of the elites at the end of antiquity,[73] and deep into the Middle Ages, we can trace if not exactly inheriting the bishopric then at least competing for the bishopric within a given circle of noble families.[74] Ecclesiastical institutions also had an important military and economic function, whether it was vassals of the ruler who settled on their land or the fixed number of armed men a given abbey or bishopric were to send in time of need,[75] or the management and organisation of various craft workshops.[76]

There is additional evidence that the "Eigenkirche" concept is only one of the possible alternatives. Particularly in the Carolingian kingdom, the church and monarchy were closely related and the program of correctio represented the essential pillar of Carolingian statehood.[77] Following *correctio* was a prerequisite for achieving the principal task of the elites defined by renowned contemporary scholars – provision for their own salvation and the salvation of their subjects – by promoting the efforts to provide the population with authentic unadulterated Christianity. This effort was the underlying basis for the understandable initiative of Charlemagne (768/774–814) and Louis the Pious (814–840), who issued one capitulary after another in an effort to provide guidelines in agreement with the elites for the correct and proper behaviour of their representatives in the regions. These endeavours by the rulers were soon emulated by the episcopate, which started to frequently put together its own sets of rules for the diocesan clergy, so-called episcopal capitularies.[78]

While the episcopal capitularies provide evidence of the activity of the centre, their reception, and thus the practical impact of these ordinances is difficult to gauge. But it's not totally impossible. Currently we register several dozen manuscripts containing mixture of texts clearly accommodating the needs of the local clergy (penitentials, basic theological instruction, provisions from contemporary ecclesiastical law, etc.), which often exhibit evident marks of wear and are written in imperfect Latin. Research has recently connected

73 Heinzelmann 1976.

74 Finck von Finckenstein 1989, 89–96.

75 Indiculus loricatorum, MGH Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum, 1, 910–1197, 632–633; Ansegis, Collectio capitularium, MGH Capitularia N. S. 1, III §75, 608. Cf. Bachrach 2012, 87–88; Auer 1971. On the concept of "Reichskirche" synthetically Santifaller 1964 and sharply critically Reuter 1982.

76 Hodges 1997, evidence also in the study by Jiří Macháček in this volume.

77 See at least de Jong 2009.

78 Capitularia episcoporum, 1–4, MGH LL.

these *codices mixti* with the needs of the local clergy, which tried to respect the episcopal ordinances.[79]

From Regino's work *De synodalibus causis* we also learn that the local priests were expected to have available some of the fundamental liturgical texts.[80] Evidence from nearby Bavaria in the form of inventories and testaments, as well as from the more remote Anglo-Saxon environment, confirms that it was not empty words of normative sources, but expectations which could be successfully fulfilled even under the conditions prevailing at that time.[81] To make it possible, the king (and the clergy) remembered to include the minimum area of land in his capitularies, which was necessary for the founding of a church;[82] earlier, Pippin III (741/751–768) made an attempt to ensure tithes for priests.[83] The efforts to provide a minimum income to priests and their churches which would enable them to fully engage themselves in pastoral work and adequately represent the church were related to the attempts to regulate the circle of persons who would be allowed to receive church consecration.[84] This indicates that the endeavour of the centre to find and ensure a certain standard even at the level of local churches was successful.

The assembled evidence clearly proves that it is a mistake to view these churches as a single-purpose establishment (source of income). Although the churches indisputably represented property of considerable worth,[85] we have seen that they equally fulfilled an important pastoral function, whereby local priests were members of the local elite.[86] We should also bear in mind their memorial function[87] and their role as a status symbol.[88]

79 The most recent summary of the subject in Patzold 2015, also West 2015.

80 Regino Prumiensis, De synodalibus causis libri duo, 1840, I. 10, p. 20.

81 Hammer 1980; Anglo-Saxon Charters 2009[3], No. 104, 192–200, esp. 195.

82 Capitulare ecclesiasticum, in: MGH Capit. 1, No. 138, c. 10, 277. Cf. Wood 2006, 439–444.

83 S. Bonifatius et Lullus, Epistolae, No. 118, p. 254. On the beginnings of tithes see at least Gilles Constable, Monastic Tithes from their Origins to the Twelfth Century, Cambridge, Mass. 1964, 19–83. An interest in collecting tithes is documented, for example, in Capitulare Haristallense, MGH Capitularia 1, C. 7, p. 48; Ansegis, Collectio capitularium, MGH Capitularia N. S. 1, II. §37, 558.

84 Capitulare ecclesiasticum, MGH Capit. 1, No. 138, c. 6, p. 276. Echoes of these ordinances can even be found in Astronomus, Vita Hludowici, MGH SRG 64, c. 28, 376/378.

85 Wood 2006, 500–501, 516 on the issue of tithes. Cf. Concilia aevi Saxonici, § 8, p. 70.

86 Patzold 2009.

87 Innes 2000, 25–26; Fox 2014, 139–194.

88 More on this further in the text.

5.5 Local Churches in Great Moravia

The Great Moravian church is obviously accessible to us only at the level of archaeological remains[89] and one standing church building. All of these structures are closely linked with the important centres, i.e. Mikulčice (up to 12 churches?), the Staré Město – Uherské Hradiště agglomeration (up to 5 churches?) and Pohansko (2 churches), and possibly with Bratislava, Děvín, Ducové and Nitra. Although we do not lack in local elites in Moravia,[90] the local churches are completely missing. Either the wooden structures did not survive, or they were not built at all – given the long existence of Great Moravia and the longevity of contacts with Christianity the second option seems less likely.

All of the buildings were erected on the initiative of the social elites, however the purpose of their construction was different in each case (public church, monastery church and perhaps even a private chapel). In some Great Moravian churches the finds included buried individuals.[91] The contemporary church adopted a cautious stance to this practice and various synodal ordinances and other normative texts frequently touched on this subject attempting to regulate and restrict it.[92] Theodulf of Orléans in his capitulary refutes this practice and reserves the right to a burial in the church for priests and "righteous people" and even proposes measures which should redress the situation in churches where too many people had already been buried.[93] A similar attitude regarding this question was adopted by Ansegisus, the author of a collection of various ordinances from the mid-ninth century,[94] while the Reims archbishop Hincmar was more placatory there.[95]

The reasons for this practice – to build a church and be buried there – were plentiful: first, the ability to build a church was an effective demonstration of social status, second, in the eyes of the contemporaries burial in a church was

89 An exception is the penitential manuals and liturgical texts, which unfortunately do not reveal much about the relationship between the Great Moravian Church and the worldly elites.

90 Štefan 2011.

91 More details in the contribution by Jiří Macháček in this book. On the possible delegation of power from the centre to the periphery Kouřil 2004.

92 Cf. from the point of view of ecclesiastical law Hartmann 2003, where it is indicated that the church slowly began to turn its attention to some funerary customs that were considered pagan (vigil over the corpse, feasts and dances etc.). It is a relatively new custom connected with the turn of the 5th and 6th century, see Scholkmann 2003, 198, including evidence of this practice.

93 Theodulf von Orléans, Capitularium I, MGH Capitularia episcoporum, 1, § VIIII, 109.

94 Ansegis, Collectio capitularium, MGH Capit., II. 46, 563.

95 Hinkmar, Collectio de ecclesiis et capellis, MGH LL Fontes iuris Germanici Antiqui 14, 82.

also tempting as a way of improving one's position before the Last Judgement, having been laid to rest next to the remains of the saints.[96] Finally, interment in a church improved the chance that the founder and his family were not forgotten.

The relationship between church ownership and corpse interment, which German archaeology of the past explained using the concepts of the "proprietary church" and the "grave of the founder" naturally met with criticism from historians, specifically that they offer a simplified solution in a situation where historical sources enable us to see more complicated and complex scenarios, which make doubtful straightforward identification of the person buried in the church with the founder.[97] Nevertheless, even Michael Borgolte admits that it is a possible and valid explanation, at least in the situation where the construction of the church and the burial were not too far apart.[98] This is probably the case of Pohansko and its second church.[99] In this particular case we have to pose serious questions about the provisions for the church and the priest who was to serve in the church.

While previous research operated with the notion of "proprietary churches" in Great Moravia quite frequently, mostly in connection with the churches in Mikulčice,[100] as a paradox, it rejected the existence of private landed property including at the level of the individual farmsteads.[101]

With more extensive landed property, where the owner was easily identifiable, this was not clear even in the Carolingian Empire. In a situation where members of the ruling dynasty, the most powerful courtiers and top echelons of the church owned properties distributed throughout the land, without the existence of relevant independent power structures through which ownership could be guaranteed, ownership just like reign was a truly complicated problem and depended on local consent just like the government.[102] It was therefore possible that a lent property could become *via facti* the property

96 Hinkmar, Collectio, MGH LL Fontes iuris Germanici Antiqui 14, 81.

97 Borgolte 2012 (originally 1985). An example of this is given at 164–166.

98 Borgolte 2012, 151–152, 167–169. Halsall 1995, 120–121, 264–265 includes even graves which were not situated inside the church, but are located at the beginning of the particular cemetery and are sure to bear some message on the social position of the buried person.

99 Cf. the contribution by Jiří Macháček in this book and the Mikulčice VII and Mikulčice XII churches. On the rural churches from that period in the neighbouring Bavaria see at least Codreanu-Windauer 2010, 205–218.

100 Poulík 1966, 41.

101 More recently, for example, in Macháček 2008. The following debate will have to differentiate between the situation in the centres and on the periphery. I would like to thank Jiří Macháček for reminding me of this valid point.

102 West 2013, 17–105.

of the holder and that farms given as a present by those who did not own them or had already given them once as a present before.[103] A kind of a solution was proposed by Charles West, who thinks that the best way to get to grips with the situation in the Carolingian era is to approach these "properties" as objects of control, rather than objects of ownership, when the ownership concept does not help to consistently conceptualise these power and social relationships between patrons and clients within the language of law until the 11th century.[104] The taxes/levies would then be more or less regular tributes and gifts due to the patron for protection rather than clearly defined ground-rent. But even those could be shared and there is no reason to deny the man buried in the second church at Pohansko the ability to exact similar payments.[105]

Given the location of the church and the surrounding buildings in the suburb of one of the castles, a link with the duke seems probable. Did this magnate exact the taxes/levies due to the duke and endow his church from them? Did he found the church in co-operation with the duke and bishop and using the income he (also) obtained from him? Or did he perhaps use only resources available to him without a tie to the ruler? All of these solutions are plausible. More importantly, they are all based on the fundamental assumption that Moravian elites shared the Frankish norms and forms of power representation.

5.6 Great Moravian Elites (and Churches)

We do not know much about how the elites of that time built their status. A suitable vocabulary of terms can be adopted from anthropology which works with the notions of *Big Man, Great Man* and *Chief*. These terms enable us to distinguish people by how their power is grounded (*Great Man*: political and military leadership; *Big Man*: control over redistribution), and possibly whether their power was achieved (*Great Man* and *Big Man*), or inherited (*Chief*).[106] We know that alongside exceptional church buildings, a considerable role in the representation of social status was assigned in Great Moravia to rich graves

103 Mordek 1997.

104 West 2013, 71.

105 It would be desirable to verify again the toponomastic arguments, thoroughly investigated in his time by Třeštík 1988.

106 Studies which are essential for defining these notions include Sahlins 1963; Godelier 1986, 79–99. On the application of these terms to early medieval matters Eichert 2014; Curta 1997.

and to wealth.[107] The phenomenon of rich children's graves is today a generally accepted indicator of the attempts of the elites to enforce a hereditary claim to the achieved position.[108] It seems that Moravian society reached the stage where the elites claimed inheritance of their position.[109] In pushing through this inheritance claim (*Great Man, Big Man → Chief*) we can simultaneously see one of the mechanisms of breaking up the originally egalitarian society which at the same time could benefit from it by finding another level of stability: there was no longer a need to fight for status again and again – it was inherited and the circle of rivals was narrowed down to a given group of persons, the selection of which the majority of others could not influence. However, the number of pieces of evidence we have available does not allow us to determine how far this process had advanced in ninth century Moravia. A certain indication of its advanced stage is, again, the group of graves in the smaller churches at Pohansko and Mikulčice.[110] (A parallel to the process that was going on in Moravia could be the transformation of the elites in the seventh century in the eastern part of the Frankish Empire. At that time, in addition to the Gallo-Roman senatorial aristocracy relying on the bishoprics for support, other social groups came to the forefront at the expense of that aristocracy and a wave of founding of rural monasteries often linked to the Irish mission and St. Columbanus was sweeping through the empire.[111])

At the same time, evidence of church buildings is also important because it shows how deep the roots of Christianity in Moravia were and indicates that the idea of Christianity surviving in Moravia during the tenth century is even more likely than it seemed in the past. This is most interesting particularly in the context of speculation on what type of identification strategies made it possible that the name of the Moravians (and the Moravians as an identifiable group) survived the fall of the duchy. The dynasty, which nevertheless left Moravia, maintained an important place in the life of the Moravians from as early as the turn of the 860s and 870s and – if we are to believe the *Annals of Fulda* – they could not possibly imagine that someone from outside this family

107 Kalhous 2014, 42–43, including earlier literature and analogies.

108 Profantová 2005; Tomková 2005; Klápště 2012, 18–21.

109 Cf. evidence in the previous notes. This phenomenon has an inherent comparative potential: e.g. in the surroundings of Metz children's graves from the 6th century with rich grave goods are quite rare, cf. Halsall 1995, 254, on the later situation ibid., 264–265; Wood 1986, 7–22, 11.

110 Scholkmann 2003, 210–211 underlines that even this is a temporary phenomenon and bar a few exceptions (dynastic cemeteries) with the end of the Carolingian period burials disappear from churches for a long period of time.

111 Geberding 1987, 96–105; Innes 2000, 13–50.

would be their head.[112] The turn of the ninth and the tenth century is marked by disputes between Svatopluk's sons – Svatopluk II and Mojmir II. Although it seems plausible that some members of the dynasty survived the catastrophic defeat by the Magyars and their rampage, they probably severed their links with Moravia.[113]

Yet, although the hierarchy of Moravian society became simpler and the local material culture showed signs of simplification and impoverishment, the "Moravian" framework of self-identification of these elites was probably preserved. One explanation for this was the longevity of the "Moravian bishopric".[114] The existence of the diocese undoubtedly provided an understandable organisational framework at least roughly permitting the delimiting of the territory on the one hand, and enabling incorporation into the ecclesiastical structure and hence Christian Europe on the other. But only a little is known for certain – that the Episcopal See was not occupied continually.[115] At the same time, that we do not hear about the Moravians shows that the local elites were not combat-ready (or were completely overwhelmed by Magyars) as to be a threat, as it was only then that the Frankish or imperial sources noticed them at all.

112 Annales Fuldenses, MGH SRG 7, as of AD. 871, 73.

113 More on the subject in the contribution by Martin Wihoda in this book.

114 This was the designation of the Moravian Bishopric still in the mid-12th century when it had already been firmly tied up with Olomouc. Cf. Charouz 1987.

115 Cf. literature in note 64 on these issues.

CHAPTER 6

"Founder Tombs" in Early Medieval Carantania: A Survey

Stefan Eichert
Translated by *Barbara Juch*

6.1 Introduction[1]

There are numerous studies on so-called "patron tombs" or "founder tombs" ("Stiftergrab" in German) for the Merovingian and Carolingian periods and the main geographic areas of these cultural and chronological periods – i.e., Western and Central Europe. Mostly, these tombs are situated inside a church or have a direct spatial connection with a church building, either on the outside or in a separate memorial building.[2] Regarding the mainly Slavic populated regions on the eastern periphery of the Franconia and the former Avaria – regions that were newly christianized in the 8th century – however, the topic has not been thoroughly investigated yet. This article, therefore, seeks to illustrate selected early medieval tombs of the Eastern Alps, which included the Slavic principality Carantania in the early Middle Ages and the Carolingian county of Carantania from the 9th century onwards.[3] In addition, this article will elaborate on whether these tombs are truly examples of founder's tombs.

Given that this discussion works with archaeological methodology, it is suggested that tombs inside a church are not automatically to be addressed as founder tombs; this is the basic premise of this article.

As for the early Middle Ages, churches or altars conventionally contain the relics of martyrs, saints, or merited persons. They are revered as patrons in this church, they are being prayed for (memoria), and people hope to receive intercession for their present life and for life after death.[4] Augustine, among

1 This article is based on research that has been funded by the FWF-Projects (Austrian Science Fund) "Eastern Alps Revisited", P.Nr. P24045. and "Frontier, Contact Zone or No Man's Land?", P.Nr. I 1911 G21.

2 Introductory: Losert 1995 and Krohn 2007 with continuing literature.

3 Concerning the history and archaeology of this area: Eichert 2012; Wolfram 1995a; Stih 2010.

4 Flachecker 1999, 145.

 | DOI:10.1163/9789004392878_007

others, described burials close to the relics (ad sanctos). The pilgrim's prayers or visitors of patron are believed to have a positive impact for the deceased Last Judgement.[5]

In some cases, the burials were indeed raised to the state of salvation or holiness when, for example, their worshipping was believed to generate miracles.[6] Such burial grounds were very popular and thus, during and before the Carolingian period, they spawned regulations that prohibited or strictly regulated their existence. In 809, during the Synod of Aachen, for example, it was strictly forbidden to build a tomb within a church.[7] Charlemagne, however, had already abolished this prohibition at the Synod of Mainz in 813, so that high-ranking and merited clergy or "fideles laici" were exempted from it.[8] Regino of Prüm also reports that, in 906, funerals were permitted in certain areas of the church, but were forbidden beside the altar.[9]

These examples of ordinances and prohibitions can be examined or traced back further.[10] In summary, however, it is possible to argue that there was no uniform line in both chronological and chorological terms. Also, an official legal standardization was only issued in the 19th and 20th century.[11]

As for the Early Middle Ages, and especially for the 8th to 10th century, it is assumed that burials within churches were in high regard and very privileged. Equally, they were reserved for the elite area and subject to different conditions. This can be explained, on the one hand, with religious reasons, given that people were concerned with their salvation. On the other hand, it can be argued that these funerals were indicators of social status and prestige.

Starting with the pagan period, the social elite was buried in separate and distinguished graves, a pattern that re-established itself under Christian superstructure, albeit in a different form. The term "Stiftergrab", therefore, refers to a privileged tomb inside the church or memorial building. Whether the recipient is the founder of the church, the owner or a patron, will be discussed in each individual case.

5 Kötting 1965, 25f.
6 Losert 1995, 3.
7 Kötting 1984, 77.
8 Kötting 1984, 78.
9 Kötting 1984, 77.
10 In detail: Kötting 1965; Kötting 1984.
11 Losert 1995, 6.

6.2 Prologue: Distinguished Tombs of the Carantian Elite from the Pagan Period

The Eastern Alps were considered pagan for the time after the end of the Roman province of Noricum and Noricum Mediterraneum.[12] The sources of the Early Middle Ages, especially the conversion-history of Bavarians and Slavs – *Conversio Bagoaorum et Carantanorum* – written in Salzburg in the later 9th century (in the following referred to as *Conversio*),[13] only talk about pagan Slavs rather than a Christian population of this area.[14]

Recently, however, growing evidence and documents strongly indicate a continuation of the Christian religion.[15] In sum, however, it is likely a rudimentary survival without institutional ecclesiastical superstructure. This continuity was seemingly carried on primarily by the autochthonous population, which was still heavily influenced by the late-Christian tradition, at the time when the area was entered by Slavic "newcomers". Subsequently, these newcomers became culturally, linguistically, politically and religiously dominant.

Archaeologists are only sparsely informed about the transitional phase from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages, as there is a lack of sources or no distinct and clear interpretation of them. From about 700 onwards, however, the social topography shifted; grave goods started to play a more important role and we witness the development of distinct social structures.

6.2.1 *Grabelsdorf*

One example is the necropolis of Grabelsdorf in southern Carinthia. It lies below the rocky slopes of the Gracarca south of the Klopeinersee. As many finds from Hallstatt- and La Tène- culture demonstrate, this area was an important prehistoric settlement point.[16] An appropriate center is adopted on the heights of Gracarca, a development which is a possible variant of the Noricum capital Noreia.[17]

12 Eichert 2013b; Nowotny 2013.
13 Wolfram 1995b; Wolfram 2012.
14 See also: Wolfram 2014.
15 A recent overview: Gleirscher 2018.
16 Gleirscher 1996; Gleirscher 1997.
17 Commenting on the discussion, cf. Strobel 2003; Strobel 2014; Gleirscher 2001; Gleirscher 2008; Gleirscher 2009.

Roman period spolia from the surrounding area also indicate a period of imperial or late-antique settlement for the surrounding area. During the 7th century, an early medieval settlement was established in the area of today's Grabelsdorf. Its population is manifested by numerous grave finds. A prominent spur of land just above the settlement revealed several prehistoric tombs, a Celtic cenotaphe, as well as early medieval inhumation graves.[18] In the flat terrain underneath, indications of other early medieval inhumation and cremation burials were observed. The secondary burial of a man in the dominant, iron age tumulus on the incline is of particular importance (Fig. 6.1). It was equipped with an awar belt, two knives, a bone box, a pattern welded single-edged sax and a Avaric spur. The combination of Western armament and armor with Eastern costume and representation is typical of the period of independent rule of Slavic elites over the Eastern Alps and can be found in the Slavic areas of Upper Austria, Styria and Carinthia.

Burials of this type are referred to as "type Grabelsdorf". The tomb of Grabelsdorf is dated to the decades around 700. The other burials in the same location do not feature grave goods and are simple flat graves outside the older grave mounds. The overall situation strongly suggests that the early medieval community attributed significance to this one burial inside the grave-mound. Nevertheless, it is uncertain whether burial grounds also served for the practices of worship or memoria. A burial mound, however, automatically represents a burial monument and the function of the monument corresponds to a memorial building.

Moreover, this is the first coherent reference for a social distinction respectively for the formation of elite from the early Middle Ages or one of the earliest in the Slavic Milieu – in the sense that, at that time, the region's population is perceived and/or addressed as Slavs. Written sources provide evidence for this dominant conception. This also alludes to the emergence of a social elite and the stratification of society.[19]

6.2.2 *Hohenberg*

Another location of similar appearance is known from Hohenberg in the Styrian Enns valley. It is a burial ground with about 40 burials dating from the 8th to the early 9th century. They are located just north-east of a St. John's church and indicate a similar orientation, which of course is connected to

18 On the early medieval usage of the site: Kohla 1966; Szameit and Stadler 1993; Gleirscher 2005; Eichert 2010.

19 Eichert 2013a.

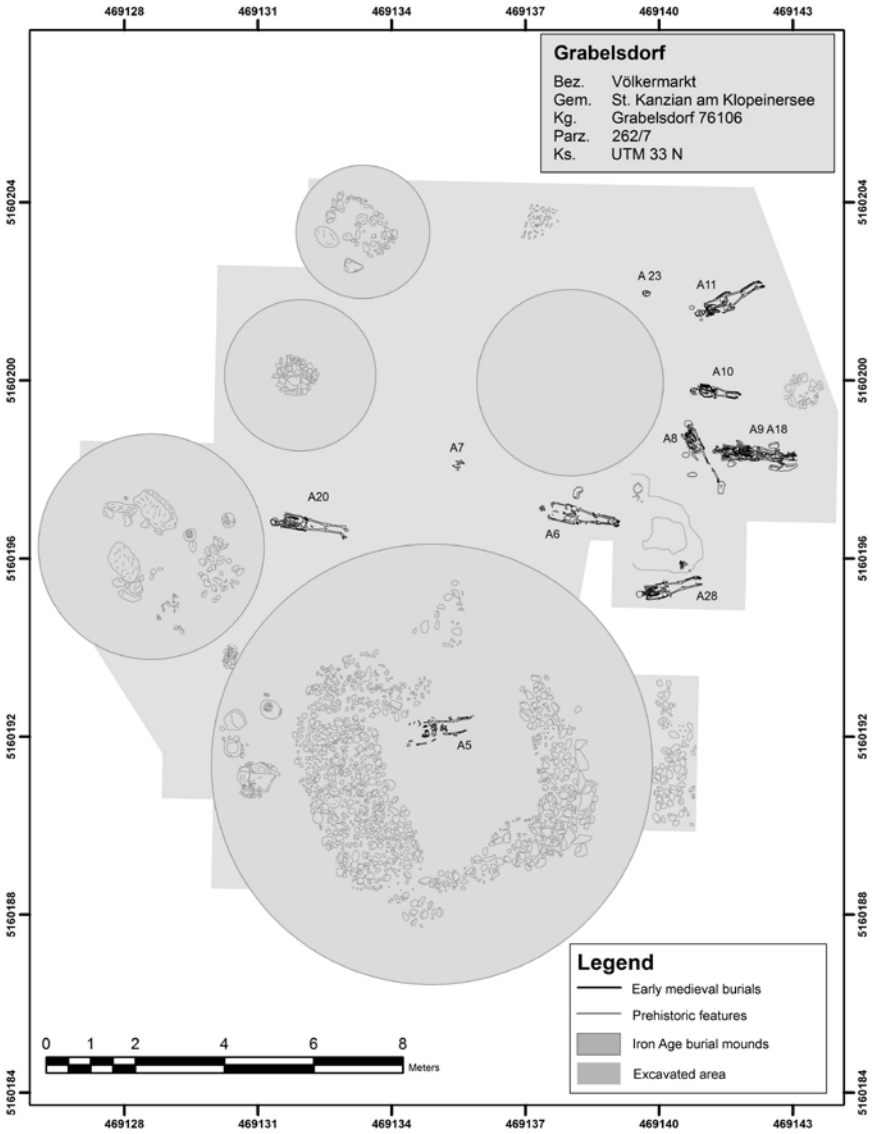

FIGURE 6.1 The cemetery of Grabelsdorf
STEFAN EICHERT AND PAUL GLEIRSCHER

issues of temporal correlations between church and necropolis (Fig. 6.2).[20] A further tomb is situated in an area whose close radius is spared by other grave sites. It had already been excavated in the 19th century and was equipped with

20 Nowotny 2008a.

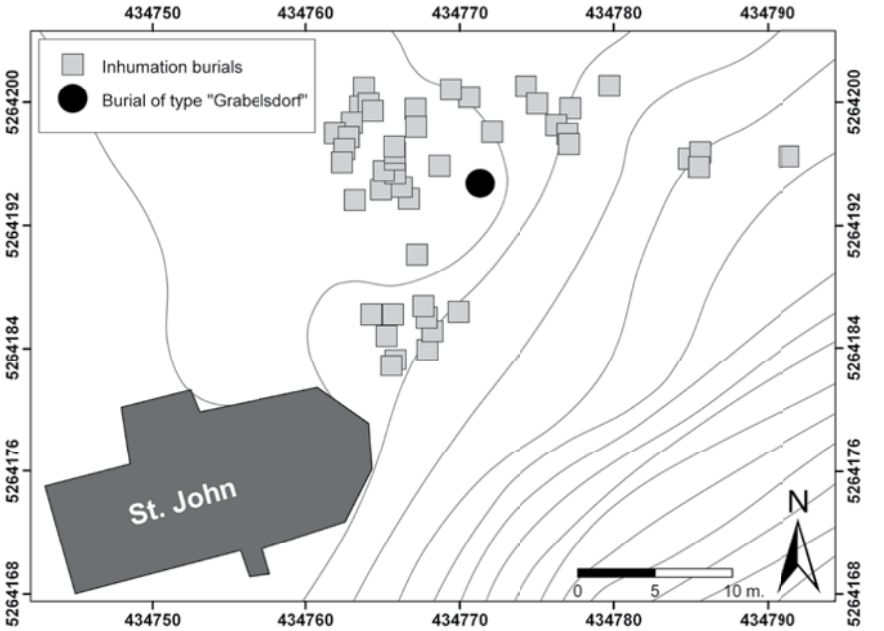

FIGURE 6.2 The cemetery of Hohenberg
AFTER: NOWOTNY 2008A

gilded, multi-part Eastern-Mediterranean-Byzantine belt garnish,[21] spurs, and a Frankish sword of the Mannheim type (Fig. 6.3).[22] There are contradictory assumptions about the construction of the tomb; it might even indicate a tumulus. Furthermore, it is commonly presumed that further burials were situated next to this tomb without grave goods or, according to one report, next to a horse skeleton. However, clear evidence is available only for the one grave with belt and sword. The site's excavation field plan also shows that the inhumation graves avoid the one burial and maintain a perimeter of several meters. It is thus likely to assume a hill over the grave. The position of the grave is also very similar to the tumulus at Grabelsdorf. It is located on the Western edge of the summit plateau at the transition to a slight slope. Its topographical position is prominent in that it offers the best visibility into and out of the surrounding area.[23]

21 In detail: Daim 2000, 136–159.
22 In 1894. See: Nowotny 2008b.
23 Eichert 2013a, 299.

FIGURE 6.3 Sword and belt from Hohenberg
GABRIELE GATTINGER – INSTITUTE OF PREHISTORY AND HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA

Further graves from Krungl/Styria,[24] Kremsdorf/Upper Austria[25] and Villach Lind as well as Baardorf in Carinthia[26] also correspond to the present scheme. Even though the documentation is not wholly satisfactory as the finds and excavations are fairly old, all sites clearly illustrate that the person equipped with weapon and belt held a special position and has thus received a privileged tomb. In Grabelsdorf, there is proof of one burial mound; other sites give indirect indications.

6.3 Founder Tombs of the Carantarian Elite in the Church Interior

The Conversio offers the main source that exemplifies the missionary of the people of Carantania. In short, it reports that from the middle of the 8th century onwards, the pagan Carantanian Slavs, "sclavi qui dicuntur quarantani", were evangelized from Salzburg. This information, however, needs to be investigated critically, as it is part of a propaganda slogan of the the 9th century archbishopric.[27] The Conversio informs that the missionary bishop Modestus

24 Presented in the unpublished dissertation of W. Breibert. First excerpts: Breibert 2008.
25 Hausmair 2008.
26 Comparison to Carinthia's sites: Eichert 2012, with referring literature.
27 Wolfram 1979; Wolfram 1995b; Wolfram 2012; Losek 1997.

consecrates several churches. As their localization is not entirely clear, they are subject to current scientific discussion.[28]

Regardless of its localization, it is important to note that although the text emphasizes the way in which Modestus consecrates the houses of worship, it does not mention who established, built, or donated them. If it had been (new) foundations of Salzburg, the author would have probably mentioned it; especially since it would have denoted a positive effect for the bishopric. The period in question thus only includes proprietary churches. Given that the owner of the proprietary church – a bishop or bishopric – is not mentioned, one might in fact exclude Salzburg as potential owner. So far, the discussion elaborates whether, on the one hand, we are dealing with foundations of the Slavic elite around the Carantanian "dux boruth", or whether early Christian churches were renovated and re-consecrated.[29] The former case indicates the first church foundations of the local elite; in the latter case one also has to discuss who was responsible for the revitalization and the preservation. Was this likely the same elite group of people? At any rate, this is the way to explain the first founder graves.

Initially, Christianization met with a lot of resistance and the written source suggests fairly troubled times and a fight against missionary activities. Certainly, political and social reasons, as well as a centralization process that began to capture the Eastern Alps, also played a significant role.[30] After the military subjugation of the rebellious population of the Eastern Alps by Tassilo III. in 772, a profound missionary process is visible. In his research on churches featuring wattle-stones, Kurt Karpf has plausibly demonstrated that these representative proprietary churches were probably built between the seventies of the 8th and the twenties of the 9th century and that they are attributable to the local elite.[31] During this period, independent Slavic princes were still in power. They were christianized and pursued a strong pro-Franconian or pro-Salzburg line. As far as representation is concerned, they sought orientation in the West, as is demonstrated by their proprietary churches.

Importantly, this period also includes the first two well-known patron graves. In both cases, however, they were not discovered in situ. There is further reference to a similar tomb in Styria. Zweikirchen in Carinthia may have also been a "Stiftergrab". Another case from around 900 appears in a donation

28 Pleterski 2000; Kahl 2008; Lehner 2009.

29 Gleirscher 2018; Eichert 2016.

30 Eichert 2014a, 28.

31 Karpf 2001.

to the bishopric of Freising, which was rewarded with a burial *ad sanctos* in the church of Maria Wörth.

These examples will be discussed in the following sections.

6.3.1 *Domitian of Millstatt*

The most famous and controversial case is provided by Domitian of Millstatt: The monastery Millstatt was established between 1060 and 1088 as a Benedictine monastery by the brothers Arbo and Poto from the dynasty of the Arbons. In 1469 it was abandoned and surrendered to the St. George's Knights. At the end of the 16th century, Millstatt was given to the Jesuits. Since the 18th century, Millstatt is a parish church.[32] Today, the building is essentially a three-aisled, Romanesque basilica with gothic elements and baroque transformations. Numerous chapels are also part of the building. Directly next to the collegiate church are the former monastery buildings with Romanesque cloister.[33]

Some of the prominent Carolingian wattle-stone findings, such as a cross-sectional representation of a cross (Fig. 6.4), illustrate that Millstatt had a church already before the foundation of the monastery and is dated between 772 and 828 in correspondence with the other churches that feature similar marble furnishings.[34]

According to Franz Nikolasch, a source from the 12th century suggests that the first church of Millstatt was donated from Prince Domitian during the reign of Charlemagne.[35] According to the legend, a pagan sanctuary preceded it, which was then destroyed by him given his prior conversion to Christianity. The sanctuary featured a thousand idols statues "mille statue", which he supposedly plunged in the lake, and from which the place name is derived. This is, of course, a learned etymology; it is more likely that the name comes from the place "where a mill stood". The Vita of St. Boniface probably served as its model.

The written records of Domitian also mention that he christianized his subjects and, after his death, was buried in a (memorial) building next to the main church. Many believers regularly prayed at his grave and healing miracles occurred. This miraculous power was forfeited when Palgrave Arbo, in the 11th century, buried his family members in the same memorial building. Between 1070 and 1090, Abbot Martin translated the bones of Domitian to another place

32 Weinzerl-Fischer 1951.

33 Dehio-Kärnten 1981, 397–407.

34 Karpf 2001, 41f.

35 Elaborating on the written records and gravestone as well as its authenticity, cf.: Eisler 1907; Glaser 1993; Forstner 1996; Kahl 1999; Pleterski 1997; Nikolasch 2006; Tomaschek 2000; Huber 2002.

FIGURE 6.4 Millstatt, Wattle stone and Domitian's tomb inscription
AFTER: KARPF 2001 AND GLASER 1993

within the church.[36] The new shrine was forgotten until the reconstruction of the church after a fire, when his bones and those of his wife and one child were re-discovered.

Under the then ruling abbot Otto, the relic was relocated a second time to a more prestigious place in the church. This second relocation is associated with a Romanic relic shrine, a long-rectangular wooden chest with metal fittings and sacred representations. It is now in the collection of the Millstatt monastery museum.

Subsequently, numerous further relocations ensued. The details of the numerous relocation efforts exceed the framework of this article. Domitian, as records indicate, was revered as saint by the local population and the monks.

In 1907, the art historian Robert Eisler conducted a thorough study of Domitian's records and concluded that we are dealing with an invention of the Millstatt monks from the 12th century.[37] The purpose was to establish a saint for the monastery. In the last decades, however, Franz Nikolasch worked extensively on Millstatt and Domitian and came to a contrary conclusion and he attests historical authenticity to Domitian.[38] Further research in the fields of science, popular culture, archaeology, epigraphy, palaeography, church-history and regional history, similarly assess Domitian's authenticity. The results are very diverse and the range of discussion includes everything from scientific discourse to emotional polemics. In the early nineties, a fragment of a gravestone with inscription was re-discovered (Fig. 6.4). It was presented by Franz Glaser and dated to the early 9th century. Its remaining text shows the name

36 Concerning the relocation: Nikolasch 2006.

37 Eisler 1907.

38 Nikolasch 1990; Nikolasch 2006. In addition: Symposium notes from the Millstatt Symposium which commonly focus on this topic.

"Domicianus". "Karoli Imp." is given as date and "Paganita" is written in the third line.[39] There is a source on Domitian which, according to Franz Nikolasch, dates to the 12th century[40] and refers to a stone inscription that existed in the monastery at that time. It names the tomb of Domitian, identifies him as the first founder of the church and as a convert of the people to christianity. The inscription does not feature the time-frame of Domitian. This part was lost due to negligence of previous generations of local people.

The passage suggests that the original grave plate was damaged at the time when the text was (until about 1170) completed, in that the fragment indicating the temporal position was broken off and lost. This fragment is plausibly connected with the one that was rediscovered, especially since the reference of Emperor Charlemagne is a chronological indication of Domitian's rule.

The typeface of the inscription fragment is classified in different ways, depending on epigraphic or paleographic emphasis.[41] Hans-Dietrich Kahl argues that both the Carolingian period and the Renaissance are possible temporal settings. Axel Huber conversely, interrogates whether we are dealing with an inscription plate of a (relic) high grave from the late 15th century.

According to Huber, the fragment could have splintered off during the dismantling of the high grave.[42] As another possibility, he suggests it might have been part of a burial plate that was damaged during the improperly executed construction of the trench in 1898. Both cases, however, are inconsistent with the passage in the source. The latter alludes to a damage of the original Domitian inscription whose temporal occurrence remains unmentioned. According to predominant dating, it does not go back further than the 14th century.

As Karl Forstner coherently argues, the epigraphic range of the Early Middle Ages in that region does not provide any suitable comparisons for the letters. He thus compares the typeface with early medieval manuscripts and ultimately excludes the Carolingian and Ottonian periods because of missing parallels.[43] Based on the Vita of Virgil, composed around 1184,[44] he defines the description of the grave-plate in the Domitian tradition as a later supplement. The absolute dating of this passage is not discussed. Eisler dates the Vita of Domitian into the 13th century (excluding miracle catalogues),[45] Nikolasch dates the first

39 Glaser 1993.
40 Nikolasch 2006, 191.
41 Kahl 1991.
42 Huber 2002.
43 Forstner 1996, 436.
44 Forstner 1996, 437.
45 Eisler 1907, 60–68.

part in the late 12th, the second with the first miracle catalogue in the middle of the 13th and the second miracle catalogue in the early 14th century.[46]

According to the legend or record of the Vita of Domitian, there was a patron tomb or even a foundation tomb in Millstatt, in which Domitian was buried. For our elaborations, however, it is essential to ask whether these illustrations are plausible. Here is an elaboration of supporting arguments:

The wattle stones found in Millstatt provide evidence for one (or more) church(es) from the decades around 800. These churches are attributed to the local elite and constitute proprietary churches from the time of successful missioning. This also means that all prerequisites for confirming basic foundation principles are offered. Even if Domitian's legend and his tombstone are unknown, one has to start from the following points: leader of a local community, christianization of the population, departure from paganism, abandonment of old sanctuaries and the construction of a new church.[47]

The argument that Domitian, as a Dux, had not ruled over the people from Carantania, and is therefore supposedly fake, assumes that, at that time, a quasi-monarchical and centralist hierarchy of power existed. Furthermore, the ruler is believed to hold a monopolized Dux title. As already discussed in several studies, a heterarchical structure is more likely to have been in place. In any case, no matter how one would have to imagine Domitian's relations with the power structures of the Eastern Alps, to address him as Dux or some other such title would not necessarily be contradiction to, for example, the line of princes in *Conversio*. Moreover, the title of Dux, which was in use after the early Middle Ages, may indicate that the story was rewritten at a later time.[48]

Christianized Slavic elites, as they are comprehensible for the Eastern Alps time frame, are eager to accept theodisc, biblical or Christian names. It does not contradict the common scheme if a local, baptized ruler from Slavic milieu goes by the name of Domitianus, especially since it is the name of early Christian martyrs.[49]

The forms of letters found on the inscription at Millstatt correspond with similar forms, for example, with the epigraphic sources of Early Medieval Croatia;[50] an insight that is contrary to Forstner's opinion. Furthermore, there are apparent parallels from culturally and temporally comparable spaces.

46 Nikolasch 1993, 38.
47 Eichert, Winckler 2012, 40.
48 On possible alternatives to the centralized model: Eichert 2014b.
49 Mitterauer 1960; Eichert 2010; Stih 2014a; Stih 2014b.
50 Delonga 1996, 425–448.

While the Vita of Domitian likely contains hyperbolic exagerations and is flavoured with different topoi, a basic element of truth is still present. The tombstone fragment can indeed be authentic and shows early medieval analogies. An early medieval church foundation by a member of the local elite in the time of the mission of the Slavic Eastern Alps is testified by the wattle-stones. There is nothing that refutes the basic assumptions of the legend; an original patron tomb is quite plausible in the first church or its annex.[51]

6.3.2 *Otker Radozlav*

To the north of Carinthia's capital Klagenfurt, there is a small church in St. Peter am Bichl, from which wattle stones of the decades around 800 are known as spolia. These stones, including a remarkable gable of a choir cabinet passage as well as a trapezoidal plate (probably an an ambo), imply, as in Millstatt, a church foundation by local Carantian elites (Fig. 6.5). It is traditionally assumed that they derive from a predecessor of today's church. Recently, however, other variants have been discussed especially for St. Peter am Bichl, namely that the church had been placed elsewhere or that the stones were imported from the nearby Zweikirchen.[52]

Regardless of what the original localization looked like, it is probable that such a church was not far away, if not in the same place. In addition to the wattles, there are two marble fragments bearing inscriptions from St. Peter am Bichl (Fig. 6.5):

Today, the outer wall features an architrave fragment of an inscription with the names *OTKER · RADOZLA* (*V*). This is referred to as a founders inscription from the decades around 800.[53] The name Otker is of theodisc origin. Today, it is referred to as "Edgar" or "Ottokar", whereas Radozlav represents a Slavic name.

It needs to be discussed whether it is in fact a double name, a name of kinship or two separate people. Theoretically, it is possible that Otker and Radozlav jointly donated the church or its equipment. It is also possible that the inscription states *OTKER RADOZLA* (*VI FILIUS*). The interpretation as a double name is compelling in that it would denote "Radozlav" as the Slavic name, and "Otker" as the Germanic-Christian name of a Carantian noble.[54] The last independent prince of Carantania, before the Carolingian take-over, is

51 Losert 1995.
52 Eichert 2012; 57–60.
53 Glaser 1999.
54 Karpf 2001, 81.

FIGURE 6.5 St. Peter am Bichl, Wattle stone and inscriptions in the church's wall
JOHANN JARITZ

known as Etgar to the author of the *Conversio*. It is quite clear from that source that he was a (Slavic) Carantanian and not a Bavarian.

In connection with the inscription of St. Peter, it is assumed that Etgar from the Conversio also had a Slavic name, but the author was either unaware or did not consider it worth mentioning. The Etgar of the Conversio might also be equated with the Otker of the inscription.[55] Even if it was not the same person, a kinship seems likely. Etgar/Otker was probably a leading name of this dynasty. Etgar (Edgar) is very widespread in the British Isles, suggesting that the name was conveyed via godparents to the Eastern Alps through missionaries from this area.[56] Another marble fragment from Saint Peter has a cross with so-called "Rotellen" on the bar ends, next to a multi-line inscription. Franz Glaser interpreted it as tombstone or sarcophagus plate inscription.[57] The letters *IN* are preserved can be interpreted as *IN HOC TUMULUS QUIESCIT*. Comparable inscriptions are known from Croatia; i.e. from the Marian church of Biskupija Crkvina, where an inscription also begins with a cross.[58] Also, the

55 Wolfram 1979, 59; Wolfram 2012, 173f.
56 Stih 2010, 120.
57 Glaser 1999, 20.
58 Delonga 1996, 80. cat. nr. 37.

grave plate of Helena from the Stefans church on the island Solin is initiated with a "[IN HOC T] UMUL [US]". There are hardly any contemporary comparisons of the cross from St. Peter, especially as it protrudes sculpturally from a recessed background, whereas the crosses are engraved on other inscriptions. A similar, if not absolute, analogy, is known from S. Giorgio in Velabro in Rome.[59] Apart from being used as a grave slab, the reading as "IN NOMINE …", for which there are similar cases, is also possible.[60]

A reasonable explanatory model for the overall findings is the foundation of the original church by the Carantanian prince Radozlav, who is known by his baptismal name. As the founder of the church, he was given the right to burial inside the church, under a tombstone with an inscription.

A possible variant for the origin of the wattle stones is the nearby Zweikirchen, granted they do not derive from St. Peter or a different church. At this site, as the name already implies, there are two places of worship. They are believed to be a monastery featuring one community church and a monastery church. In addition, however, it is possible that the second church is in fact a tomb chapel, in which Otker-Radozlav = Prince Etgar was buried.

However, these are hypothetical explanatory models, which cannot be verified without further excavation

6.3.3 *Beatrix of Mariahof*

The church of Mariahof is located in Styria, close to the border with Carinthia and to a popular south-north route through the Alps across the Neumarkter Sattel. Given its present appearance, it is a late-Gothic building, which probably originated after a late 15th century (re-)construction. During reconstruction works in April 2001, an early medieval wattle stone with a wide range of motifs was discovered (Fig. 6.6).[61]

This gives rise to numerous considerations on the church's temporal and cultural origins. The wattle stone from Styrian Mariahof, presented by Susanne Lehner, was initially dated to the first half of the 9th century. Later, however, it was temporally dated in accordance with Carinthian wattle stone churches from the decades around 800.[62] In the church, there is a modern wooden box which supposedly contains the bones of the legendary church founder Beatrix.

As an outcome of finding of the wattle stone, the object was investigated closely and an anthropological determination and radiocarbon-dating of the

59 Kutzli 1981, 94, img. 74.
60 Cf. Delonga 1996, 106, cat. nr. 64.
61 Lehner 2002; Brunner, Hebert, Lehner 2004.
62 Lehner 2002, 184; Brunner, Hebert, Lehner 2004, 86.

FIGURE 6.6 Mariahof, Wattle stone
STEFAN EICHERT

bones was initiated.[63] The analysis illustrated that the wooden box contains a single adult woman of about 165 to 167 cm height. The skeleton is nearly completely preserved. The calibrated radiocarbon dating[64] of a rib suggested a date of 640 to 777 AD for the 2 Sigma range. The data indicates that, she must have died before the 9th century.

In the last few years the association *Fiale*, under the direction of Astrid Steinegger, has carried out excavations in Mariahof, and has successfully

63 Brunner, Hebert, Lehner 2004, 89.
64 Beta Analytic Inc. Miami/Florida, Beta -165758.

identified the predecessors of today's church. In addition, they discovered burials with grave goods from the 9th/10th century.[65]

In sum, the finds seem to indicate that Mariahof already had a church in the early Middle Ages. Theoretically, it is also conceivable that the wattle stone and the bones were from a different place and were only transported to Mariahof at a later time. Evidence from current archaeological excavations indicates that they most likely derived directly from Mariahof.

On a late-Gothic panel in the left-hand side of the presbytery, Beatrix is addressed as the daughter of Count Markwart II and the sister of Henry III. from the dynasty of the Eppensteiner. Her date of death is February 24, 1120. However, there is no familiar historical persona that would fit into these characteristics. We know of Beatrix of Swabia from the 11th century; the daughter of Hermann III of Swabia, the sister of Empress Gisela, and thus sister-in-law of Emperor Conrad II, and wife of Duke Adalbero of Carinthia, who was also an Eppensteiner. The duke Henry III, who is mentioned in the panel painting, was married to a Beatrix who also died on a February 24th of an unknown year.[66]

Given this context, Bernhard Hebert underlines the connection with the monastery's chronic of the nearby St. Lambrecht, which also reports on Beatrix. This suggests that after a destruction of the church in 1482 a tomb was exhumed, and the salvaged bones were believed to be those of the legendary Beatrix.[67] Given that the skeleton is entirely preserved and undamaged the remains were likely deposited in a sarcophagus or stone container rather than a simple earthen grave. This suggests that it was a privileged grave in the interior of the church. To summarize, Mariahof illustrates the following model: In the 8th century, (at least) one first church was founded there. As Walter Brunner points out, the church/churches could have been part of a manor as he assumes a Bavarian foundation.[68] Similar to other examples, it may have also been a proprietary-church of the local (Slavic) elite. A privileged individual, who may have related to the owners of the church, is buried in the church or in a stone sarcophagus of a tomb chapel.

The foundation of this church dates between the Christianization of the Eastern Alps (from about 750/757) and 777, the termius post quem of radiocarbon-dating. The church/the churches were provided with precious marble furnishings. It remains unclear whether we are dealing with a very early case for

65 I would like to thank Astrid Steinegger for pointing me towards the unpublished information.

66 Brunner, Hebert, Lehner 2004, 99–101.

67 Brunner, Hebert, Lehner 2004, 90.

68 Brunner, Hebert, Lehner 2004, 91–99.

such a form of design, or whether, analogous to Kurt Karpf's model, only the last years of the period can be considered. Mariahof also has a chapel, which is connected to the sacristy and which is dedicated to St. Michael. This is connected to questions of a double church, as in Zweikirchen.[69]

New excavations have produced structural analogies to Molzbichl[70] and it seems as if the Mariahof choral barriers extended into the laity, which, in the case of Molzbichl, was explained with the status of a monastery church.[71] This suggests that Mariahof had both a monastery church and a church for the "common" people.

When, at the end of the Middle Ages, a new building was constructed in the form of today's church, the bones were recovered and connected with the legendary church founder Beatrix. If so far two separate churches have existed, the patrocinium of the chapel above the sacristy might be a reminiscence. There are also no references to a monastery at the time.

6.3.4 *Maria Wörth – the Donation of Georgius and Tunza*

Today, the peninsula of Maria Wörth is home to two churches and a Roman Karner/Ossarium with a church cemetery. The parish church is situated on the highest point of the peninsula and is dedicated to Holy Primus and Felicianus. Its present appearance is a late-Gothic or early-Baroque church. The second place of worship, the so-called "Winterkirche" or "Rosenkranzkirche", is an (early) Romanesque choir-square church (Fig. 6.7).[72]

Originally, Maria Wörth was a "real" island. As sea levels declined, in sea, the area became a peninsula. The Slovenian name "Otǒk", in fact, means "island".[73]

Written sources concerning this locale start in the second half of the ninth century. Between 875 and 883, Bishop Arnold of Freising traded land "ad Uueride" with the nobleman "Cotescalc" in exchange for one at "Rasa".[74] "Uueride" (Wörth) must have referred to the area directly around Maria Wörth. "Rasa" presumably refers to Buchenheim near Rosegg, where possessions of Maria Wörth were still documented up until the 18th century.[75] However, the document does not feature the description of a church.

69 Gleirscher 2018; Mariahof.

70 According to reports from the excavator, a substructure was found in the area of the choir barriers. However, it does not extend transversely but bends into the lay room but extends into the which features a straight form. I want to thank Astrid Steinegger for this advice.

71 Karpf 2001, 39.

72 Dehio-Kärnten 1981, 383–385; Malloth 1979, 43f.

73 Pagitz 1960.

74 MC III, 38.

75 Pagitz 1960, 33 and 124.

FIGURE 6.7 Maria Wörth, Peninsula and churches
JOHANN JARITZ

In 891, King Arnulf donates a chapel to Bishop Waldo of Freising at the royal court in "Liburnia". This donation is made in honor of the Freising Holy Korbinian and from worship of St. Mary, as well as of Primus and Felicianius – the latter to whom the church "Uerid" (Wörth) was consecrated.[76]

The list of saints and the later name Maria Wörth (instead of only Uueride – Uerid – Wörth) clearly illustrate a church in Maria Wörth and the local veneration of the Virgin Mary. The worship of the Virgin Mary continued and in the 15th century an altar was erected in the tower of the parish church, to venerate Mary.[77]

Around the middle of the 12th century, Bishop Otto I of Freising raised Maria Wörth to the state of collegiate. The consecration of the second church is also documented in this context. It remains unclear, however, whether it was a new building or a renewed consecration.[78]

76 MC III, 63.
77 Pagitz 1960, 34.
78 A rebuilding is discussed by: Malloth 1979, 36.

Regarding the issue of founder graves, one specific document, issued between 883 and 906, is of special interest.[79] This document states that a "nobilis vir nomine Georgius" donated possessions to Freising at Lake Wörth, in order that he and his wife "Tunza" may receive a grave in the church of Maria Wörth. It is also mentions that Tunza is the sister of Heimo and daughter of Witigowa.

As early as 1960, Michael Mitterauer subjected this document to a thorough analysis. He argued that Georgius originated from the native, christianized Slavic elite, and that his wife Tunza (=Slavic nickname for Antonia) came from a "Western" family that was in close contact with Emperor Arnulf.[80] Mitterauer was to first to point out that after the end of the autonomous rule of the Carantian princes over the Eastern Alps, the autochthonous Slavic elite was by no means completely disempowered, but was integrated into elitist Franconian networks. Research conducted in the last few years has commonly referred to his important conclusions.[81]

Georgius and his wife Tunza made an outstanding gift to the church of Maria Wörth, and received in exchange the right of burial inside that church. This is also argued in contemporary decrees.[82] To this day the location of their grave remains unknown as evidence for its placement it is not attested by inscriptions nor archaeological finds. It is also unknown whether they found their last resting place in Maria Wörth. Nevertheless, the document indicates that it was customary to "purchase" founders graves in Carinthia in the 9th century. This shows that not only founders or donators of a church are buried inside the church, but that it was also possible to "buy" ones way into a church.

6.4 Conclusions

Based on the above examples, the question of the so-called "Stiftergräber" in the Eastern Alps was investigated. Currently, no direct evidence is available, nor has a founder grave been discvovered in situ. Still, there are several coherent cases that suggest that tombs of the social elite are situated in the interior of the church. Privileged graves of the elite are also found in the pre-Christian context, for example as secondary burials in prehistoric burial mounds. The contrast to other tombs illustrate the social hierarchy, resulting from matters of social prestige and religious activities. This tradition is carried on with the

79 MC III, 48.
80 Mitterauer 1960.
81 e.g. Eichert 2010; Eichert 2014; esp. 50f; Stih 2014a; Stih 2014b.
82 See above.

Christianization and instead of burial mounds, people are buried in the church interior or a memorial building of a proprietary church. The case of Domitian of Millstatt exemplifies this development and, in the case of St. Peter am Bichl, two inscriptions indicate something similar.

As for Mariahof, its dating and the complete preservation of the bones suggests a sarcophagus in the church. The excavated tombs date to the second half of the 8th and the first third of the 9th century. The donation of Georg and Tunza to Freising, which granted them a tomb inside the church, provides evidence that founder tombs were still customary during the later middle ages.

CHAPTER 7

Great Moravia, the Beginnings of Přemyslid Bohemia and the Problem of Cultural Change

Ivo Štefan
Translated by *Miloš Bartoň*

When, in the early 10th century, grieving relatives and faithful retainers buried a robust man inside a small rotunda in the suburb of Pohansko near Břeclav (a church that that man may have built next to his residence), they had no reasons to be happy about current affairs in their country.[1] The Magyar attacks in the first decade of the 10th century destroyed the social order that had been gradually established in the Central Danube region during the 9th century as the local Slav communities came into close formative contact with Frankish culture. In the turmoil of the wars with the Magyars, the polity we call Great Moravia disappeared before the year 907, and Bavarian power in the Danube basin retreated beyond the river Enns for several decades after. Shortly afterwards, purely by coincidence, the election of the Saxon duke Henry I as East-Frankish King (919) resulted in the empire's centre shifting from Bavaria to Saxony. The core of Great Moravia was situated in the fertile lands in the eastern part of what is today the Czech Republic and West Slovakia, and for a short period during the reign of Svatopluk (871–894), the Moravians achieved hegemony over several regions in Central Europe. While in the early 10th century, clouds of war and destruction were gathering over Great Moravia, neighbouring Bohemia, which remained largely outside the reach of the Magyar raids, experienced accelerating development leading to political unification under Přemyslid rule. But Moravia was not definitively conquered by the Přemyslids until 1029.[2]

As in the traditional approach Great Moravia was the first to make the step out of the undifferentiated Slav world of "noble savages" towards "national statehood", the relationship between the vanishing Mojmirid Moravia and the emerging Přemyslid Bohemia is often perceived as *translatio regni* (a transfer of reign) from Moravia to Bohemia. The archetype of this scheme is seen as

1 This work is one of the outcomes of the GA ČR 16–20763S grant project (*The Landscape of Medieval Prague*).

2 Wihoda 2010, *104–113*.

 | DOI:10.1163/9789004392878_008

early as the end of the 10th century in the Monk Christian's account of the baptism of Bořivoj at Svatopluk's court, who is said to have been promised by Methodius that, as a Christian, he would become *the lord of his lords*.[3] From the time of Charles IV (1346–1378) this motif was a vehicle for numerous political and religious programmes.[4] The existence of a real Great Moravian "tradition" in early medieval Bohemia was, in the 1960s, resolutely rejected by the respected historian František Graus, who considered medieval allusions to Great Moravia a newly construed ideological instrument.[5]

A pupil of Graus, Dušan Třeštík, adopted an ambivalent attitude towards the Great Moravian heritage. On the one hand, in accord with Graus, he made Slav liturgy and literature a marginal episode in Přemyslid Bohemia,[6] but on the other, he gradually made Great Moravia into a formative model that can be applied both to early medieval Bohemia, Hungary and Poland. The influential concept of "a state of a Central European type" was born in the 1960s and 1970s.[7] It proclaimed basic agreement on the anatomy of the above-mentioned Central European monarchies in the 11th and 12th century. All of them were to operate on the principle of the sovereign reign of a Christian ruler, territorial administration of the land ensured by a system of castles under the management of a official elite dependent on the ruler with the resulting non-existence of a nobility whose power would be based on ownership of extensive landed estate. The material needs of the ducal apparatus were provided for by the so-called service organisation, which left an imprint on specific local names. This socio-economic model differed in many aspects from the one we know from the Frankish Empire, where the power of the aristocracy was closely linked with land ownership.[8] The question arose of how the similarities between Bohemia, Poland and Hungary are explained. While at the end of the 1970s the Czech protagonists of this concept were still not totally clear about this,[9] ten years later Dušan Třeštík did not hesitate to state that Bohemia, as well as Hungary, was a "successor state" of Great Moravia and Piast Poland subsequently adopted these patterns from Bohemia.[10] However, according to Třeštík this new form of organisation did not appear out of nowhere in 9th century Moravia, but

3 Kristiánova legenda, 19.
4 Wihoda 2010, 76–81; Antonín 2014.
5 Graus 1963.
6 Třeštík 2006.
7 An overview of the main titles in Třeštík, Žemlička 2007, 122–134.
8 E.g. Keller 1991; Innes 2000; Airlie 2012.
9 Kremieńska, Třeštík 1978, 200.
10 Naturally it was not a symbolic succession in the sense of *translatio regni*, but a transfer of know-how concerning how to form a 'state': Třeštík 1987, 38–39.

"the Central European state was a standard, late antiquity-Carolingian model, only slightly adapted and with additional genuine local novelties, such as the so-called service organisation".[11] The scheme of the transfer of Great Moravian know-how has undeniable charm in that it enables us to narrate the history of Central Europe as a single continuous and interlinked story.[12] But as with any great narrative this concept is accompanied by serious problems.

In Central Europe the centralisation processes greatly accelerated in the 9th and 10th century and resulted in the emergence of the above-listed polities. There is no arguing that all those mentioned constituted typical "secondary states" which, in great part, owe their origin to contacts advanced states.[13] It is difficult to trace the share of innovations stemming from local traditions and those adopted from the outside. To claim that a single type of "state" was transferred from Late Antiquity via Great Moravia to Piast Poland is, in the terms of cultural anthropology, a typically diffusionist statement. Diffusionism considers human societies to be essentially passive and cultural change is interpreted as the outcome of external influences.[14] This is in accord with the later *world system model* and the acculturation concept.[15] Both count on the dissemination of innovations from the creative core to the passive periphery, or from Western Europe to the Slavic lands. The following text will concentrate on just a narrow section of this complex problem: what did contact between the Bohemian basin and so-called Great Moravia look like, what form did it take, and how did it influence the operational mechanisms of the Přemyslid duchy and the representatives of its inhabitants. Attention is focused primarily on archaeological manifestations, but we cannot avoid setting them in a historical context.

Fragmentary evidence of both polities is provided by infrequent and re-interpreted written sources. They offer the basic framework of events and information on the people involved, but they say relatively little about the structure of society. Hopes of a deeper understanding have therefore been raised by new archaeological investigations made since the post-war period. The language of their results is completely different from the narrative of chronicles and legends. They obligingly answer questions as to what contemporary people ate in those times, in what abodes they dreamt their dreams and what jewellery they wore, but they speak only indirectly about the complicated

11 Třeštík 1999, 168.

12 Třeštík 2000; Třeštík 2006, 16.

13 The concept of primary and secondary states: Price 1978.

14 Diffusionism played an important role in the explanation of changes in cultures and in archaeology. Further in Trigger 2006², 217–222.

15 Herstkovits 1938; Wallerstein 1974; Stein 2002, 904–905.

web of relationships between people. As a result, researchers have not reached an agreement on even the most basic questions.[16] The following text is far from being a presentation of the results of genetic tests, which would show whether Přemyslid Bohemia was or was not the child of Great Moravia. Rather it will be a simple stocktaking based on available information showing in which ways the two differed and how they were similar.

7.1 The Frameworks of Encounters

The supraregional contacts of the inhabitants of the Bohemian basin, situated close to the geographical centre of Europe, were not restricted to the southeast only. Interactions with the neighbouring East-Frankish Empire was of essential importance. If we disregard the uncertain location of the expedition of Frankish King Dagobert I against the leader of the Slavs Samo in 631, systematic interactions of the Frankish Empire with the *Bohemans* started with the campaigns of the armies of Charlemagne to the Bohemian basin in 805 and 806.[17] These conflicts put the *Bohemans* into the mottled mosaic of the *gentes* at the periphery of the Frankish Empire, whose formal subordination is manifested by their participation in the imperial assemblies and by the payment of tribute.[18] An extraordinary report from among the standard military conflicts informs us about the adoption of baptism by 14 dukes of the *Bohemans* in the presence of Louis the German, probably in Regensburg in 845,[19] whose motivation and further continuation of Christianity in the Bohemian basin have remained the perennial subject of argument.[20] The great intensity of contacts with the western environment in the 9th and at the beginning of the 10th century is also indicated by numerous finds of exclusive Carolingian artefacts, which as symbols of social status became part of the grave goods of outstanding men.[21] Bohemia maintained a position of formal subordination to the Frankish and subsequently German Empire with short breaks until the beginning of the 13th century. An essential role was also played by involvement in imperial ecclesiastical structures. Until the establishment of the Prague bishopric in 973, the Bohemian territory was directly part of the Regensburg

16 Further see the current debate on the nature of Great Moravia: Macháček 2009; 2012; 2015; Kalhous 2014; Profantová, Profant 2014; Štefan 2011, 2014.

17 Třeštík 2001b, 71–85.

18 A poignant description of political practice: Smith 2008.

19 MMFH I, 121.

20 Most recently: Wihoda 2018; Štefan 2018.

21 Profantová 2009; 2011.

diocese and, consequently, until 1344 it was subordinated to the archdiocese in Mainz.[22] While the relationship with the West may to a certain extent be approached in the categories of centre – periphery, the interaction with the early Polish state which did not start to emerge until the 2nd half of the 10th century was based on an equal position on the European scene and at the beginning one can rather count on a transfer of ideas from Bohemia to Poland.[23]

The spatial framework of the interaction between the inhabited regions of Bohemia and Moravia was predetermined by geographical conditions. The natural boundary between them was formed by a forested stretch of the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands several dozen kilometres wide which slowly began to be populated from both sides no earlier than during the 12th century.[24] From the 8th century at the latest it was crossed by communication corridors – thought to have been maintained. Clear evidence of traffic is provided by the increasing number of finds of artefacts with Avar characteristics in Bohemian territory.[25] While we are unable to reconstruct the exact course of the long-distance communications for the period under discussion, we can expect a connection along the route of the later, so-called Trstenická, or alternatively Haberská, path. When passing through the Elbe basin, in the earlier horizon the route was very likely connected with strongholds along the Šembera river and at the time in question probably by the monumental Stará Kouřim and other strongholds. One of these routes was taken in 846 by Louis the German after his expedition to Moravia, whose troops were decimated by the *Bohemans*,[26] or in 871 by an entourage of 644 armed horsemen accompanying a noble bride from Bohemian to Moravia.[27] The centre of Great Moravia in the valley basin of South Moravia was separated from the Prague basin by approximately 250 km as the crow flies, which is a little more than the distance to the nearest of the large centres of the East-Frankish Empire – Regensburg. However, the physical route must have been considerably longer – a working estimate is at least 350 km. Average estimates for travel in the Middle Ages are 25–40 km for foot travellers and merchant's caravans and 50–80 km for horsemen per day, whereby the speed was essentially determined by the quality of the roads and "travel infrastructure".[28] Therefore, slow travellers needed

22 Sommer, Třeštík, Žemlička 2007.
23 Berend, Urbańczyk, Wiszewski 2013, 236–238.
24 More recently Hejhal 2012.
25 Profantová 2016.
26 MMFH I, 91.
27 MMFH I, 109.
28 McCormick 2001, 470–474.

at least 9–14 days to negotiate the journey from Mikulčice to the Prague basin and it took 4–7 days for those on horseback.

The wide and dense borderland forest likely restricted everyday communication and links between relatives in common agrarian communities to a minimum. The principal mover in terms of contacts was the elite, which, according to numerous pieces of written evidence, was a regular and confident player on the political scene in Central Europe and undoubtedly well-informed about what was happening at the neighbours. We expect that it was the elite who were the principal initiators and the driving force behind innovations. Another mobile group, but one about which we rarely find data about in the written sources, is professional merchants. The considerable distance and the barrier of the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands made it impossible to control the Bohemian basin directly from the Moravian centres without establishing military garrisons there.[29] The same problem, although in reverse, had to be later resolved by Břetislav I (1034–1055), who at the end of his life chose the seniorate system of so-called Moravian fiefs, granted to members of the Přemyslid family who were not ruling in Prague.

The traditional historical framework of Moravian-Bohemian contacts in the 9th–beginning of the 10th century, as recounted by the written documents known to us, enables to define at least the principle stages. The very first mention of the Moravians at the assembly in Frankfurt in 822 names the *Bohemans* alongside representatives of other Slav *gentes*.[30] The first written evidence of direct contact between the Bohemian and Moravian elites is the departure of Slavitah, son of the rebellious Bohemian duke Vistrach into Moravian exile in 857,[31] which must have been preceded by mutual contacts and perhaps even an alliance. Up until Svatopluk's reign (871–894) we have no evidence that the Moravians would attempt to expand outside their territories. We can therefore presume that the eastern neighbours were taken as one of their political partners by the Bohemian dukes, one with whom they are thought to have entered into a coalition from the mid-9th century against the East-Frankish Empire, which from that time would intervene simultaneously in Moravia and Bohemia.

The most intensive stage in Bohemian-Moravian relationships was possibly marked by the above-mentioned marriage of a noble Bohemian bride in 871. However, we are unaware of her family relationships and that notion the

29 It is estimated that the limiting distance for direct control in the Early Middle Ages was around 100 km: Urbańczyk 2008, 55–57.

30 MMFH I, p. 47.

31 MMFH I, p. 96.

she was betrothed to Svatopluk himself remains a hypothesis. According to Regino of Prüm, in 890 the ambitious Moravian ruler annexed, with the prior consent of Arnulf, the *regi ducatum Behemensium*,[32] whereby the Annals of Fulda speak, on the contrary, of "forcible separation … from the power of the Bavarian nation".[33] However, the (enforced?) annexation of Bohemia to Svatopluk's realm may have happened shortly before that.[34] It is traditionally assumed (but without direct evidence) that Svatopluk, through his direct military intervention, supported Bořivoj, the first member of the Přemyslid dynasty known to history, who under Svatopluk's spiritual mentorship received baptism at the hands of Methodius before 885. After his death, probably in 889,[35] Bohemia became another segment of expanding Great Moravian influence for four years, soon to be followed (very likely at a strictly formal level) by Sorbia. According to Thietmar of Merseburg, the latter was the land from which the *Bohemans* were to collect tribute for the Moravians.[36] It is most likely to that short period of time that the most intensive interactions between Moravia and Bohemia may be attributed, including the presence of Moravian warriors in (Central?) Bohemia. During his stay in Moravia, Bořivoj, accompanied by his closest retinue, likely garnered first-hand experience and acquainted himself with the practical functioning of the Moravian duchy. Several Moravian priests arrived in Bohemia in connection with his baptism. Sources are silent regarding the strategies adopted by the Moravians against the other Bohemian dukes who were not from the Přemyslid dynasty. It is generally believed that it was the Moravian intervention that installed Bořivoj of the Central Bohemian Přemyslids as their head. One cannot discount the possibility that the so-called Strojmir's revolt, cloaked in the guise of a pagan uprising and mentioned only later by Christian at the end of the 10th century, was related to the Moravian intervention. As the following events clearly show, after Svatopluk's death in 894 the Přemyslids no longer demanded assistance from Moravia and following developments suggest that even Svatopluk's reign in Bohemia was accompanied by tension.

The arrival of "all the dukes of the Bohemans" led by Spytihněv and *Witizla* in Regensburg in the following year of 895 and their submittal to King Arnulf definitively closed the relatively short chapter of Moravian rule over the *Bohemans*.[37] Given that in 897 the Czech dukes asked again for assistance

32 MMFH I, 142–143.

33 MMFH I, 124.

34 Recapitulation of the discussion: Třeštík 1985, 284–290; Třeštík 1997, 192–195; 338.

35 Třeštík 1985, 287.

36 MMFH I, 156.

37 MMFH I, 121.

against "their enemies the Moravians" who "cruelly oppressed them",[38] we expect that it was in the interest of the Bohemians to oust disloyal Moravian warriors (who had not left by themselves) from the Bohemian centres.

The last stage of the history of Great Moravia, which started with the succession conflicts and ended sometime around 906 in the whirlwind of wars with the Magyars, overlaps with the long and probably successful reign of Spytihněv I in Bohemia (895–915). The antagonisms came to a head in three weeks of plundering of Moravia by the *Bohemans* together with Bavarian troops in 900.[39]

Moravia as a centralised polity represented by a ducal dynasty, disappeared from the written sources in 906[40] and did not appear again until it was definitively joined to Bohemia after 1018, or even until 1029.[41] Much of is known today about the downfall of Great Moravia derives from the results of archaeological research,[42] which provides evidence of the rapid disintegration of the whole system, the main cause of which was undoubtedly the Magyar attacks. It is therefore justifiable to speak, together with Joseph Tainter and his followers, of its collapse.[43] The result was a marked simplification of the social and economic structure of society. The nodal points of Great Moravia were the large and intricately structured South Moravian centres such as Mikulčice, Staré Město near Uherské Hradiště or Pohansko near Břeclav, in which we also look for the residences of the senior elite, garrisons of professional troops and centres of the ecclesiastical organisation.[44] The decline of some of them can be directly connected with their being conquered by the Magyars (see the contribution by Pavel Kouřil). In any case, from the beginning of the 10th century their walls were not reconstructed, and the majority of the inhabitants likely left within a short period of time. Archaeological evidence of social diversification, such as exclusive grave goods, disappears as the agglomeration was abandoned by specialised craftsmen. Most of the local ecclesiastical buildings were destroyed, thus forcing the departure of the clergy. Among the important centres a decline is not observable only in Olomouc, situated on the upper reaches of the Morava, where most of the authors today place the seat of the mysterious Moravian bishopric mentioned in the year 976.[45] While Christianity

38 MMFH I, 124.
39 MMFH I, 127.
40 Třeštík 1991, 9–27.
41 Sláma 2006, 81–94; Wihoda 2010, 104–109.
42 Overview of opinions: Štefan 2011.
43 Tainter 1990; Faulseit ed. 2016.
44 Macháček, 2010.
45 Bláha 2000; Jan 2006.

survived in Moravia under hazy circumstances and in something like an attenuation mode until Moravia was annexed by the Přemyslids, it is difficult to think of any flourishing of ecclesiastical life and culture in this period. The disintegration of central power was followed by its fragmentation between the regional elites, who proceeded in agreement on important matters and it was very likely that these elites carried awareness of the Moravian identity through the 10th century. In the early 10th century, some elites may have joined the Magyars,[46] who had already conquered several Moravian centres, but did not settle in any of them. There are indeed a few typical artefacts, but no typically Magyar burials.[47] The Moravian elites of the 10th century did not catch the attention of Frankish writers, suggesting limited international significance and activity. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the 11th century as allies of the Poles, they were able to defeat a large Bavarian military contingent.[48] During the following Bohemian annexation of Moravia the regional elites might have been liquidated by Přemyslid warriors.[49] In the first half of the 10th century the restoration of a united Moravia could have been blocked by the interventions of the Magyars, who passed through Moravia several times on their campaigns via Bohemia to Saxony and Thuringia as well as the Přemyslids, who under the reign of Boleslaus I (935–972) gained control over the trade route via Olomouc to Cracow.[50] The Moravian elites of the 10th century left almost no archaeological traces. One assumes that they resided in those strongholds that had not been completely abandoned, e.g., Staré Zámky near Líšeň and, perhaps, Zelená Hora near Vyškov.[51]

If we read the sources correctly, with the exception of the church tradition fixed in written documents, some of the 'know-how' of Great Moravia was passed on only by those who witnessed first-hand the era of flourishing agglomeration. The next generations of Moravians born into a society with a lesser degree of complexity gained a completely different type of generational experience.

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46 A letter of complaint from the Bavarian episcopate from the year 900: MMFH III, 232–244.

47 Kouřil in this volume; Profantová 2008.

48 *Thietmari Merseburgensis episcopi Chronicon, VII/57*, p. 470.

49 Wihoda 2010, 108–109.

50 Summary of the discussion: Sláma 2006, 82; Třeštík 2001a.

51 Although life in the vast agglomerations in the southern part of the land dwindled, these places (whose traditions often went back as early as the 8th century) may have retained their symbolic and even central significance in the landscape including after the fall of Great Moravia as the Přemyslid administrative castles or market places were established in the 11th century more or less close to them. A summary in: Procházka 2009.

7.2 Landscapes of Power and Forms of Representation

Who were these Moravians the representatives of the *Bohemans* encountered in the 9th and the beginning of the 10th century? The answer to this question is far from simple. Meagre reports from the second half of the 9th century in Frankish annals inform us almost annually of conflicts and reconciliation but say nothing regarding the nature of the relationships between the ruler, the elites and the common people. Other infrequent sources are not much help either. The simple fact is that, on the outside, Moravia was represented by a single Christian duke from the Mojmirid dynasty from probably as early as the 930s. We also find several mentions of nameless members of the Moravian elite neutrally referred to as *optimates*, *primates*, *nobiles viri* or exceptionally *principes*.[52] Nevertheless, we unable to assess their share of power or the degree of their dependence.[53] Great Moravia is usually considered a typical example of the first stage of the so called "states of the Central European type". According to Dušan Třeštík, its structure "actually matches a late tribal society", which was "kind of overlaid with the structure of a state from the outside". He saw a fundamental constitutional difference between Moravia and the Přemyslid Bohemia in the fact that "while the Přemyslids (i.e. Boleslaus I) conquered and subordinated the other Bohemian duchies from their centre in Central Bohemia, whereby they also gained superior ownership of land as well as the landed estates of the old dukes, the Mojmirids seized power in a united tribe of the Moravians but they did not eliminate its aristocracy, nor did they execute the right of the conqueror to come into possession of the land of the free Moravians".[54] Elsewhere he connects the origins of Great Moravia with internal conflicts between the different groups of the elite on the Morava river (e.g. conquering the Olomouc region) and expansion to the region of Nitra.[55] In other words, we know nothing about the extent to which the origin of Great Moravia was accompanied by the liquidation of the old elites.

An even trickier question is who ruled the Bohemian basin at the time of the Frankish-Moravian wars. Here, we move at the level of hypotheses and models suffering from a lack of information on social structure and the political geography of Bohemia. Since the 19th century historians have been reduced to pondering the few vague pieces of information from the Frankish annals and the oldest Bohemian legends. They have attempted to bridge the discrepancy

52 Bílková, Fiala, Karbulová 1967, 314–317.
53 Reports collected in: Steinhübel 2014.
54 Třeštík 1997, 293–294, 296.
55 Třeštík 2001b, 130, 132.

between mentions of a greater number of dukes in the Bohemian basin and the, outwardly, united *Bohemans*.

The rejection of the existence of "Bohemian tribes" at the end of the 1980s[56] did not resolve, but only edged out the question of the relation between the above-mentioned Bohemian dukes of the 9th century and the mysterious *natio Luczano* or *Lemuzi* and *Chrovati*, who were known to Cosmas still at the beginning of the 12th century.[57] The denial of the existence of "anthropogeographic units", of which only neutral political duchies were left, brought the discussion to a standstill. Within this concept it is impossible to satisfactorily explain where the dukes of the 9th century actually came from, who they represented and what their power was based on and, most of all, why a unified Bohemia should have had so many dukes.[58] Dušan Třeštík attempted to reconcile this discrepancy by marginalising their links with the "tribe" which the dukes "easily abandoned under adverse circumstances". Their power relied on hereditary castles and "a small retinue but with very tight bonds to the lord"; and it was elected by the tribe but only "where this institution still existed".[59] The "tribe" in this approach represents a kind of organised but totally ephemeral folk as opposed to the duke, whose main executive body was the assembly, paradoxically controlled again by the dukes, who represent the assembly and were elected by it, but who were actually independent of the assembly in making cardinal decisions, such as when receiving baptism in 845.[60]

Personally, I maintain that we need to search for points of departure to rekindle the interrupted debate. The basic framework for the classification and organisation of traditional communities is kinship. The permanently settled patrilocal exogamous communities (which we can consider the Slav populations to be) that during their reproduction slowly branched out, forming quite complicated ancestral lines, where they derived their origin from a common single ancestor or ancestors and as a result were interlinked by real or fictitious relationships. However, this does not mean that the system had an inherent primal equality built into itself. The so-called segments, *ramages*, or conical clans, as they are termed by the anthropologists, were hierarchically subdivided into ancestral lines of varying prestige while slavery, or classification as the free and the unfree, was quite common. Members of the most prestigious lines represented the clans or branched-out family trees. Their positions were

56 Třeštík 1997, 54–73.

57 *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica Boemorum* 23, 138.

58 These problems have been more thoroughly addressed by Josef Žemlička 1989.

59 Třeštík 1997, 77.

60 Třeštík 1997, 90–91.

elevated by "political" marriages with other prestigious lines, thereby gradually forming an endogenous, mutually related supraregional elite. While this system of "regulated anarchy" was characterised by great volatility, over time the battle for the leading position was reduced to a limited circle of individuals.[61] As Karol Modzelewski pointed out kinship and collective responsibility for the members of the lineage laid the foundations of the architecture of European communities before the emergence of centralised polities,[62] but may have survived long afterwards.[63] Within the *étatisation* process the kinship relations are gradually suppressed by the formalisation of power.

We can assume that the Bohemian *duces*, who emerged in Frankish sources in the 9th century, were nothing other than members of the above-mentioned prestigious lines of extensive akin regional groupings identical with "tribes",[64] which conferred legitimacy upon them and contributed to their material support. It is highly unlikely that they behaved despotically among their own folk. They continued to rely primarily on being favoured by their followers. Nor were the strongholds built under duress, as they were something of a "shop window" of the whole segment which was obliged to its elite with traditional duties.[65]

In any case, the geopolitical arrangement in the Bohemian basin must have been different from, for example, the political structure of the Slavs in the Elbe basin, which the Frankish chroniclers knew equally well as Bohemia. While north of the Bohemian basin they mention smart manoeuvres of the Carolingian rulers among the individual clans and their segments,[66] from 805, when they first enter into the spotlight of the Frankish annals, the *Bohemans* outwardly appear as a political unit. The only description of the political representation of Bohemia in 9th century has been left to us by Regino of Prüm, who, in connection with their submitting themselves to Svatopluk in 890, writes that the *Bohemans* "used to have a duke (*principem*) of their own blood

61 Sahlins 1961; Bodarenko 2008.

62 Modzelewski 2004, 119–196.

63 The only clear traces of large kinship clans in Bohemian sources was left by the Vršovci, "a haughty and guileful clan", which was not liquidated even by a double or triple massacre. The well-informed author of the Annals of Pegau speaks in connection with the murders of three thousand killed in Bohemia, which "by far exceeds what we generally understand under the phrase 'a branched out family tree'": Kopal 2001; on the rural environment in general: Charvát 1992.

64 More on this new approach in: Wihoda 2015, 60.

65 Early thoughts on the traditional duties in: Žemlička 1989, 700–701.

66 For example, the Bavarian Geographer speaks of a number of *regions* in Sorbs and Velets: MMFH III, 286, more on the interpretation in: Brachman 1978, 162–167. Even Obodrite territory was comprised of several independent and freely associated parts over a long period: Fritze 1960.

and nation above themselves until that time and pledged to remain loyal to the Frankish kings".[67] The report has long been a source of puzzlement among scholars.[68] It apparently contradicts the baptism of 14 Bohemian dukes in 845, affirmation of Frankish sovereignty by several Bohemian dukes in 856 or mention of the Frankish clash with the troops of five dukes in 872.[69] The overall diction of the Frankish annals in relation to the *Bohemans* is indeed slightly different than in the case of the Moravians. How many noble representatives of the branched out related clans could be found in 9th century Bohemia is difficult to say. What at first glance seems to be a logical link between the data from the so-called Bavarian Geographer on 15 castles (*civitates*) in *Becheimare*[70] and a mention of the baptism of 14 Bohemian dukes in 845, who would therefore represent the whole of the Bohemian basin,[71] need not necessarily be a reliable solution. Following the logic behind the data on 11 (or alternatively 30) *civitates* in Moravia we should expect to find the same number of Moravian dukes.

It is difficult to imagine that, in contrast to the Slavs in the Elbe basin, the Franks would not have taken advantage of the conflicts, which must have broken out among the equal dukes during the 9th century. In addition, strict autonomy would have seriously complicated political decisions, outward communication and certainly collection of the annual tribute from Bohemia, which was probably one of the constitutive elements of political consensus from the beginning of the 9th century.[72] Could Svatopluk, after 890, effectively control a territory whose power structure was based on the principle of autonomous regional units? Naturally, the hypothesis of a hierarchical structure of a principal "duke" executing hegemony over regional elites is nothing new,[73] but is pushed to the margins by the concept of the forcible unification of Bohemia by the Přemyslids after the assassination of Wenceslas in Stará Boleslaus in 935. If we disregard the report of the violent death of the mysterious Lech in 805, an indication is the large Frankish expedition in 857 organised specially against "the consistently defiant Vistrach's castle", controlled by his son Slavitah. Its exclusive position in the Bohemian basin is implied by the fact that Slavitah's brother, chosen by the Franks, was consequently received by Louis the German, who appointed him duke instead of his brother, which

67 MMFH I, 138.
68 Overview of the discussion: Třeštík 1985, 285.
69 MMFH I, 89, 94, 107.
70 MMFH III, 249.
71 Třeštík 1997, 84.
72 Wihoda 61.
73 Třeštík 1997, 54–73; Steinhübel 2014, 75–77.

would not make sense if he was a regional ruler.[74] A clear clue to the Přemyslid hegemony can be found in the Annals of Fulda in connection with the subordination to Arnulf in Regensburg in 895, with the arrival of "all the dukes of the Bohemians … whose leaders were Spytihněv and *Witizla*.[75] When in 929 the troops of Henry the Fowler invaded Bohemia, they headed straight for Prague, "the castle of the Bohemians".[76] Without delaying himself by laying siege to other strongholds, Henry the Fowler must have assumed that the ruler of Prague was able to ensure the subordination of the whole of Bohemia and the payment of tribute. An oft-cited piece of evidence for the existence of non-Přemyslid elite is Christian's account of the uprising of the Kouřim *princeps*. However, the narrative concludes that the revolt against the future saint was a breaking of the rules and the formal superiority of Wenceslas is related at the end of the story.[77] Therefore, in Christian's rendering the Kouřim *princeps* was not an independent ruler of the Kouřim region, but its governor subordinated to Wenceslas. The gradual concentration of small regional "duchies" into larger units is believed to have taken place even during the 9th century.[78]

Today's dominant concept of the enforced union of the whole Bohemia by Boleslaus I (935–972), stands and falls thanks to a single mention by Saxon chronicler Widukind of laying siege to the castle of a "neighbouring *subregulus*" in 936, where we are not able to be sure even of the fact that it was located in Bohemia.[79] Nothing is known about the enforced unification in the oldest legends, nor in Cosmas, who otherwise did not spare a single good word for Boleslaus I. We can indirectly deduce that a full-frontal attack by the Přemyslids would have fatally weakened Bohemia in the same way that Moravia had been weakened earlier by the succession conflicts after Svatopluk's death. By breaking up the whole social network with one blow, the Přemyslids would have immediately paralysed the whole system. It seems implausible that Boleslaus, with his assumed miniature Central-Bohemian contingent of 350–400 warriors, could simultaneously have successfully liquidated one regional duchy after another, fought against Otto I, raised an army of at least a thousand men which he sent in 955 to the Lech and on top of that expanded through Moravia

74 MMFH I, 94–95. Slavitah is considered the main duke also in Třeštík 2001b, 171 and Steinhübel 2012, 61–62.

75 MMFH I, 121: "… *omnes duces Boemanorum … quorum primores erant Spitignevo, Witizla …*".

76 *Widukindi monachi Corbeiensis Rerum gestarum Saxonicarum I/35*, p. 50–51. More on the privileged position of the Přemyslids at that time in: Sláma 2006, 39.

77 *Legenda Christiani 10*, pp. 108–110.

78 Žemlička, 1989.

79 *Widukindi monachi Corbeiensis II/3*, pp. 68–70.

to the Cracow region and further on.[80] Nor is the presumed "acquisition" of warriors in exchange for slaves a credible solution.[81] Although Bohemia was linked to the international slave trade, any deliberations regarding its extent are mere speculation.[82] Theoretically, Boleslaus could have spent the obtained means for weapons for the army. However, without professional warriors being granted lands, their subsistence was left to local resources drastically diminished by fighting, which could have led to revolt, if not systemic collapse. Třeštík's argument moves in a circle from an expansion connected with slave hunting via Boleslav who needed an army which he was to provide for by the sale of the slaves.[83]

It is likely that the pushing through of Přemyslid dominance was accompanied by military clashes, but I presume that Boleslaus founded his authority preferably on the consolidation of the existing social relationships, rather than breaking them up. He probably continued the tradition of the central authority which the Přemyslids had enjoyed long before that. The subsequent fortunes of the regional elites could have been widely varied. Thanks to Adalbert of Prague we know a little about the Slavnik family, whose probable kinship with the Přemyslids[84] may not be necessarily the simple key to the origins of their power. Some kinship undoubtedly binds the be found across the whole of the Bohemian elite of the Early Middle Ages. But the very fact of a working mint facility owned by the Slavnik family, which manufactured their own coins, casts doubt on the absolutist position of the Boleslaus of Prague. The degree of continuity between "pre-state" elites before the 11th and 12th century is impossible to assess based on the available sources.[85] Traces of old blood relationships were stillobserved between the lines in Cosmas' time, but it was not in the interest of this canon to make a deeper analysis of this parallel structure. He does not explain who the "elder of the land" or "greater by birth" incorporating the mysterious *gens Muncia* and *gens Tepca* "powerful at arms, unwaveringly faithful, valiant in battle and excelling in riches" were.[86]

The consolidation of the polities was accompanied by the establishing of offices, i.e. the formalisation of competences within the framework of the emerging court of the ruler. We know very little about Great Moravia in this

80 Žemlička 1995, 207.
81 Třeštík 2001a.
82 Štefan in print.
83 The resulting sum assumed by Dušan Třeštík would be reached by Boleslaus after 50 years: Kalhous 2012, 32.
84 Sláma 1995.
85 More on the continuity of the elites in: Kalhous 2005; Wihoda 2015, 60–61.
86 *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica Boemorum I/42*, 72.

respect. However, the existence of the high office of *zupan*, mentioned in the Zákon sudnyj ljudem, is very likely there.[87] This title, the origin and etymology of which have not been satisfactorily explained, appears for the first time in the form *iopan* in the foundation charter of the Kremsmünster in Upper Austria in 777, where it designated the leader of a group of Slavs, and there is also later evidence, for example in Croatia.[88] Regarding Bohemia in the 11th to the beginning of the 13th century, Latin sources list a number of administrative and honorary offices, which show clear inspiration from the imperial environment. The title *župan* itself does not appear until the end of the 12th century.[89] And so we are standing again at the familiar crossroads; either this function had been hidden until that time under one of the Latin terms or it was a novelty in Bohemia introduced, possibly, from the Hungarian environment.

What can archaeology reveal about the social structure of Bohemia and Great Moravia in the 9th and the beginning of the 10th century? The power of the elites is based on ideologies which justify and generate their exclusive status. They are articulated by specific ceremonies, symbolic objects, patterns of behaviour and representation through prestigious objects, which are not generally available in society. These patterns, as a whole, are a new development. Elements from foreign and distant elements societies may at times enjoy great popularity and thus be incorporated into the local context.[90]

The residences of Slav elites, whose power was, according to written sources, hereditary, are naturally sought within the fortified areas. But not all of them must have necessarily fulfilled residential functions. For a period roughly (!) until the beginning of the 10th century archaeologists have succeeded in collecting evidence of settlement from more than 70 fortified sites distributed all over Bohemia[91] and based on the research results in about half of them it is possible to assign the origin of the fortification to that period. Their number is therefore considerably greater than in Moravia and Slovakia at the same period.[92] The initial problem is the unbalanced state of our knowledge of the individual regions and the uncertainty in the dating of a great number of the sites, based in the majority of cases on ceramic production, which is difficult to synchronise across the regions. The origin of the earliest strongholds in Bohemia and Moravia is tentatively attributed to the 2nd half of the 8th century. Construction of the massive fortifications with a combined

87 MMFH IV, 180, 191.
88 Wolfram 2005, 217.
89 A summary in: Žemlička 1997, 184–187.
90 DeMarrais, Castillo, Earle 1996; Stein 2002, 907–908.
91 A current map in: Boháčová, Profantová 2014, Fig. 7.
92 Staňa 1985; Procházka 2009.

structure featuring a stone front wall in Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia, began probably as late as the 2nd half of the 9th century.[93] The origin of this innovation remains unknown, but it cannot be ruled out that it was an adaptation of Frankish models.[94] It is not without interest that the first wave of building fortifications in the Frankish lands may be dated to the same period.[95] In any case the construction of massive fortifications in Bohemia and Moravia at roughly the same time indicates an extraordinary increase in the intensity of social interactions and an ability to mobilise and organise a large workforce. For comparison, the most extensive enclosed fortification in Great Moravia at Pohansko near Břeclav protected an area of 28 ha,[96] a stronghold at Stará Kouřim covered an area of about 44 ha sometime at the end of the 10th century, in Prague-Šárka possibly a little earlier (?) 25 ha and the fortification of the Prague agglomeration in the 10th century altogether at least 40 ha.[97] The massive fortifications required that a great part of the standard agrarian communities from their hinterland were engaged in the construction[98] and it can be assumed that the reward for them consisted in providing refuge at times of danger. Let us point out though that many societies were capable of large energetic investments even in the later prehistoric period.

The interpretation of the interlinking of the centres is strongly influenced by the diction of the written sources. While in Moravia and West Slovakia the strongholds are traditionally interconnected into a single (albeit loose) network subordinated to Great Moravian rulers, in Bohemia up until the end of the 1st third of the 10th century they are interpreted in connection with competing regional authorities. Hence the different perspective of the motivation for the fortification activities. As it ensues from what has been said above, this contrasting view need not have fully corresponded with reality.

Regional systems which can be paired with the assumed "duchies" have so far not been satisfactorily defined in Bohemia, and archaeology cannot offer

93 Lutovský 2009, The earliest dendrodata was provided by research at Hradec u Stoda in West Bohemia, the wood from the ramparts with a chamber structure and a frontal stone apron was felled in 870/871: Metlička 2007. The fortification of Pohansko near Břeclav can probably be dated no sooner than the 880s: Deresler et al. 2010. The external rampart at Znojmo-Hradiště sv. Hypolita provided the datum 888: Dresler 2005, 223. In Mikulčice attempts to gain dendrodata from the rampart have so far failed, data from the first bridge "after 828" until "after 871": Poláček, 2012, 34. The origins of the massive fortifications of Slovak strongholds fall within the end of the 9th century: Henning, Ruttkay 2011.

94 Kos 2012.

95 Most recently in: Ettel 2013, 12.

96 Macháček 2010.

97 Sláma 1986, 75, 84; Havrda 2008, 667.

98 Štefan, Hasil 2014.

solutions to the problem.[99] We don't know how many polities we should look for, what determined them, how they were internally structured, delimited nor to what extent they were stable. A model example at hand is Kolín, Kouřim and Libice nad Cidlinou in the eastern part of Central Bohemia, forming a triangle with sides of roughly 15, 20 and 12 km. All of them yielded finds of graves with exceptional grave goods from the 2nd half of the 9th to the beginning of the 10th century associated with the top-level elites and linked to fortified centres.[100] Were these sites subordinated to a single authority or were they something like miniature "city states" represented by their own elites? How stable was the division of power within the region and what was the relationship between the buried magnates to the previously mentioned Kouřim leader or the powerful Slavnik? Similar questions, supported by even less evidence, can be asked regarding other regions in Bohemia, but we should bear in mind that the archaeological picture does not significantly differ from Moravia.

Based on the oldest legends, Central Bohemia is the only region where we can link strongholds from the last third of the 9th century into a single operative network under Přemyslid rule. However, accounts indicate that although the region could have been controlled by a single family, at least until the murder in Stará Boleslav (935), some of the castles fulfilled the function of private residences of non-ruling members surrounded by their own retinue. Thirty years after the formulation of the concept of the so-called Central Bohemian Přemyslid domain[101] it seems that its development was drawn-out and complicated; strictly taken it is not possible to exactly demarcate its boundaries during the individual stages.[102] Prague Castle, and with it probably the suburbium, was enclosed by an earth and wood rampart as late as the beginning of the 10th century and some of the castles on the perimeter may have not been built before the reign of Boleslaus I.[103]

If we take the structure of the Central Bohemian domain in the original sense as the defence of access to the central Prague basin by means of fortified points situated on important roads, we won't find traces of a similar strategy in Great Moravia. The most prominent Moravian centres were linearly "threaded" on the watercourse of the Morava and the Dyje and they were not protected by

99 Examples of the interpretation of the settlement patterns in relation to the reconstruction of the polities in: Trigger 2003, 92–119, Thurson 2002.

100 In Kolín it was probably situated within the historical town: Košta, Lutovský 2014; To Stará Kouřim: Šolle 1966; Profantová 2001; To Libice nad Cidlinou: Mařík 2009.

101 Sláma 1989.

102 A revision of the dating of the individual sites and some reservations on the concept of the domain: Varadzin 2010; Boháčová 2011; Lutovský, 2009, 7.

103 Boháčová 2009; Varadzin 2012; Štefan, Hasil 2014.

"outpost" fortifications.[104] The system of Central Bohemian castles was obviously a solution which responded to the local political situation. The structure of the so-called Central Bohemian domain was much closer to the core of the Piast domain in Greater Poland the main centres of which sprang up within a short period in the 930s and 940s.[105] But unlike Bohemia, even at a later time we won't find a single "capital" among the most important Polish *civitates principales*, such as Prague in Bohemia from the beginning of the 10th century, and early medieval Hungaria had no single centre either. Hungarian researchers take rather a dismissive stance on the Great Moravian origin of the Hungarian castle system[106] and Polish scholars do not take any direct inspiration from the Přemyslid domain into consideration.[107]

Large strongholds are known in the 9th century even from the remote Slav Baltic where they are linked to a response to the Carolingian expansion[108] and the territory of the Obodrites, where in the 11th and 12th century the network of castles helped bolster the power of the local dukes.[109] A system of territorial administration of the land through castles, close to the advanced Bohemian "castle organisation" in the 11th and 12th century, started to be introduced in the 940s by the Saxon dynasty even in the neighbouring Slav Elbe basin (the so-called Burgwardorganisation).[110] The basic strategy of control and defence of the land through castles in the Slav environment therefore definitely preceded the origins of Great Moravia and in the regions where the development led to the rise of centralised polities, the castles provided natural regional support to the power of the ruler.

To what extent did the structure of the Bohemian centres of the 2nd half of the 9th and 10th century resemble those in Great Moravia? Let us point out again the main limits: The most important Great Moravian centres, despite their location in a similar type of landscape, were clearly distinguished from one another, suggesting they were functionally differentiated, and prevents generalisation. In addition, in some cases there are different opinions regarding the function of some precincts within the individual agglomerations. Examples include the Staré Město-Uherské Hradiště agglomeration[111] or the

104 Procházka 2009, Fig. 175.
105 Kurnatowska 2002; Kara 2009.
106 Györffy 1976, 347; Gericz 2000, 571.
107 An overview of the opinions in: Kara 2013.
108 Brather 1998.
109 Müller-Wille 2002.
110 Billig 1989.
111 There are several opposing opinions on the location of its central part with the ruler's residence: an overview in: Galuška 2001.

fortified bailey at "Na Štěpnici" in Mikulčice, where Josef Poulík situated elite members of the ducal retinue, and Jiří Macháček identified slaves waiting for the transport to Arabian markets.[112] Given the unbalanced state of the source base, there is little to do except remain at the level of superficial comparison.

In terms of the overall area of the agglomerations, apart from Prague, the Great Moravian centres are unparalleled in Bohemia in the period under discussion. Unfortunately, at the time of the systematic excavation of Bohemian strongholds the question regarding the use of the fortified areas was not the main agenda and as a result we have only vague idea of what the subsidiary areas were used for. Unlike Moravian, no unfortified suburbs have so far been identified in Bohemia, except for Prague. The considerably larger number of permanent inhabitants in the Great Moravian agglomerations is also confirmed by the finds from the excavated cemeteries. An exceptional phenomenon in Central Europe is the necropolis at Staré Město-Na Valách with more than 1,800 graves, which can be considered the central cemetery of the Staré Město agglomeration.[113] A comparable number of 1,500 burials was preliminarily reported only from Mosaburg-Zalavár (Hungary) in the surroundings of St. Hadrian's Church.[114] The individual cemeteries from the period of interest attached to the Bohemian centres (again except for Prague) have not exceeded two hundred burials for the time being.[115] The discrepancy between the intensive settlement of the *suburbium* at Malá Strana from the end of the 9th century and the deficit of related cemeteries raises some questions.[116] The regular structure of the built-up areas identified at Pohansko near Břeclav,[117] and in a slightly different form in the above-mentioned bailey in Mikulčice, can neither be confirmed nor ruled out in the case of the Bohemian strongholds.

From the beginning, extraordinary importance for the interpretation of Great Moravian society as a whole has justifiably been attributed to the presence of a greater number of sacred buildings situated both inside and – in the case of the rotunda at Pohansko – outside the fortified enclosures. They are usually interpreted as "proprietary churches" (see the contribution by David Kalhous) thought to be connected with social representation of members of the highest Moravian nobility, whose residences are sought for in their vicinity – but so far without any confirmed results.[118] Although legends from

112 Poulík 1975, 135; Macháček 2015, 474–475.
113 Galuška 2001, 130.
114 At present it is not clear how long the necropolis was used: Szőke 2010, 36–37.
115 An overview in: Frolík 2015, tab. 8, p. 96.
116 Čiháková, Havrda 2008, 218–219.
117 Macháček 2010.
118 Poláček 2010.

the 10th century indicate the existence of stand-alone courts of important members of the retinue even in Přemyslid strongholds,[119] churches were evidently not part of their furnishing. Aside from the Slavnik clan, it seems that until the 11th century the only founders of the ecclesiastical buildings were the Přemyslid family.[120] Evidence of proprietary churches in Bohemian castle centres and their hinterland is not available until the 11th century.[121] The only sacred building in the Prague agglomeration except the castle itself, which could hypothetically fall into the discussed period, is the assumed predecessor of St. Wenceslas' Rotunda in Malostranské Square.[122] If our social interpretation of the Great Moravian churches is correct it testifies to the considerably more emancipated position of the Moravian elites, who were probably inspired by the foundational activities of the elites of the East-Frankish Empire[123] or the Pannonian duchy of Pribina and Kocel.[124]

From the beginning of the 9th century Moravia and Bohemia became part of a wide zone which confronted the Frankish world with varying intensity. However, the reception of Frankish forms of representation was obviously selective. The patterns of social representation are mainly disclosed by cemeteries. But even in this area we can attribute a key role to the elites initiating new forms of burial ceremony, only later adopted by the common population. It is generally assumed that cremation was abandoned in Moravia as early as the beginning of the 9th century, while in Bohemia the burial of corpses which had not been burnt to ash became prevalent gradually and unevenly later, starting from the mid-9th century. The oldest dateable inhumation burials probably include graves with rich grave goods in the southern section of the cemetery at Stará Kouřim, the double grave from Kolín and the grave of the "duchess" at Želénky. The remains of a disrupted grave under the north-east corner of the Church of the Virgin Mary at Prague Castle are equally worthy of attention.[125] The acceptance of inhumation among the general population was probably highly differentiated regionally and we cannot rule out that in some areas it was not practised until the beginning of the 10th century.[126] But even in this particular area we cannot be sure how much it was influenced by the

119 It is possible to mention Boleslaus' entourage member Hněvsa in Stará Boleslav, or the residence of Duchess Ludmila at Tetín.
120 Written sources analysed in: Sláma 1986, 24–28.
121 A summary in: Klápště 2012, 43–57.
122 Čiháková 2009.
123 Wood 2006, 33–47, 437–443.
124 Szőke 2010, tab. 1, p. 10.
125 Maříková-Kubková, Herychová 2015, 70.
126 Štefan 2007.

Great Moravian environment and what role was played by contacts with the elites of the Frankish Empire. A direct link between abandoning cremation and the advent of Christianity cannot be confirmed. The introduction of inhumation in the mid-9th century coincides in time with the mysterious baptism of Czech dukes in 845.

Exclusive weapons and other warrior attributes were part of a supraregional Carolingian style that literally swept over the periphery of the Frankish Empire from Scandinavia to Croatia.[127] The contemporary collection of finds from Moravia and Bohemia provides clear evidence of intensive contacts with the Frankish environment, when it is not always easy to distinguish direct imports from local imitations.[128] Exclusive men's and (women's) attire in Moravia and Bohemia probably was different from the Frankish custom, where the outer garment consisted of a tunic held on the shoulder with a buckle.[129] We know of hardly any clasps from the Great Moravian and the Bohemian environment, although they occurr in the neighbouring Danube basin. Moravian workshops might have produced typical bearded axes, finds of which are conspicuously concentrated at cemeteries in the eastern part of Central Bohemia.[130]

One of the general characteristics of Great Moravian cemeteries attached to the central sites is the presence of magnificent grave goods. There are considerable differences between individual cemeteries regarding the representation and composition of the objects, but we still don't know how to link them with social or temporal factors. In Bohemia warrior grave goods were used to a much lesser extent than in Moravia. The low representation of militaria is best observed in Central Bohemia. For example, in the necropolises attached to Prague Castle a sword was uncovered only in the so-called warrior grave in the third courtyard, while axes and spurs are also rare finds. A typical component of grave goods of the Moravian elites – belt ends – which undoubtedly had a significant socially indicative meaning in Moravia, are absent in Central Bohemia. A similar situation is observed in the case of larger cemeteries linked with Budeč, Levý Hradec and in Klecany. The representation of militaria at Stará Kouřim (from where we also know of belt ends, alongside Kolín) and at the cemeteries in Libice nad Cidlinou is more frequent.[131] The fact that ostentatious warrior grave goods were not part of the repertory of the presentation of the top-ranking Central Bohemian elite shortly after the collapse of

127 Wamers 2005; on the so-called Blatnice-Mikulčice style: Ungerman 2011.
128 Profantová 2011.
129 Wamers 1994.
130 Boháčová, Profantová 2014.
131 An overview in: Frolík 2015, tab. 6.

Great Moravia is underlined by a male burial without grave goods in the interior of the Church of the Virgin Mary at Prague Castle, attributed to Spytihněv I († 915).[132] Grave goods do not accompany the next generations of the Přemyslids interred in the Basilica of St. George either. Roughly from the mid-10th century the custom of laying objects in male graves disappears throughout Bohemia altogether. The reasons for the low popularity and quick abandoning of warrior grave goods could be seen in the intensive adoption of Frankish funerary customs which excluded warrior attributes, starting from as early as the beginning of the 8th century.[133] The gradual exclusion of warrior attributes from the range of means of representation is also observed in Moravia, as is evidenced by burials in the rotunda at Pohansko. In the other areas at the eastern edge of the Carolingian Empire militaria were applied as part of the funerary ceremony more rarely from as early as the 9th century.[134] But it was not a trend that would sweep across the whole of Europe. Other areas, such as Southern Scandinavia for example, reached a peak in this respect in the 10th century.[135]

In the Moravian environment weapons and equestrian equipment do not occur in the centres only but are found in almost any well examined rural cemetery. Burials furnished with militaria in Moravia can be attributed to local representatives of the free peasants who occasionally joined the army of Great Moravian rulers. Their service to the central authority was therefore determined both by their legal status and their access to "modern" military equipment on a par with that of the Frankish armies. This means that in the 9th century rural Moravia was not made up of a mass of serfs.[136] In contrast, in the Bohemian environment, occurrences of weapons in rural necropolises are rather rare, although we don't know where this is a reflection of the limited access of Bohemian villagers to weaponry and their exclusion from military operations or simply because they did not put weapons into the graves of the deceased. Given the low popularity of this custom in the top echelons of society, I would opt for the latter alternative.

An important social indicator is burials of boys furnished with militaria, most often spurs and axes. Some of them are of miniature size adapted to the

132 A skeleton of a man and one of a woman were damaged from the ankles to the ribs. The bones of the feet have been preserved: Borkovský 1953, 152–153.

133 Krüger 2001; Eibl 2005.

134 At the central cemetery of the Austrian stronghold at Gars-Thunau with 250 excavated graves three burials were accompanied by a sword and four by spurs: Nowotny 2013; In the Hungarian Zalavár, the seat of Pribina and Kocel the number of graves with militaria did not reach 1%: Szőke 2010, 35–42.

135 Pedersen 2014.

136 Štefan 2014, 153–155.

height of the children. which suggests made-to-order production. We are not sure whether these miniatures were used only during the funerary ceremony or when they were still alive. In the Great Moravian environment, as well as in Bohemia, we find these small warriors exclusively in prestigious cemeteries linked to the centres, but they accompanied just a tenth of the interred children at most. At the cemetery in the Lumbe Garden at Prague Castle spurs were uncovered in five graves only, three of which belonged to immature boys.[137] The presence of warrior attributes with children is often taken to signify hereditary social status.[138] Conversely, the need for such a ritual manifestation could serve to prove the fact that a hereditary social position was not taken for granted. In any case the strong link of militaria to a child's grave in a cemetery closely attached to the centre of the Bohemian duchy confirms the marginalisation of their significance during the funerary rite.

A question arising in this context concerns the possibility of the arrival of sword-wielding men in Bohemia at the time of the crisis and after the collapse of Great Moravia, who could have reinforced the retinues of the Bohemian elites. At the moment we are unable to identify the origin of the warriors in the Central Bohemian centres. A remarkable fact in this respect is that women significantly outnumber men in cemeteries attached to Prague Castle.[139] In the case of the Litoměřice region the scenario of the arrival of Moravian warriors was recently proposed by Petr Meduna. Within 10 km around Litoměřice we observe a concentration of more than ten cemeteries with finds of weapons, which is unusual in Bohemia. Roughly within the same circle we find specific pottery of the so-called Litoměřice type, which is close in its morphology and technology to one of the pottery groups from Pohansko near Břeclav. The author therefore considers the possibility of the transfer of a whole section of the Great Moravian system.[140]

The serious study of Moravian-Bohemian contacts began with the discovery of pieces of Great Moravian jewellery in Bohemia.[141] Unlike the male social attributes the models for the magnificent Great Moravian jewellery should not be sought in the West but rather in the Byzantine sphere of influence.[142] Their exact models have not so far been identified and it seems that their specific style could have been fully developed in the Moravian workshops. Almost

137 In cemeteries in the eastern part of Bohemia small warriors occur only rarely: Frolík 2015, 105.

138 Klápště 2012, 20.

139 Frolík 2015, tab. 8.

140 Medina 2009.

141 Systematically for the first time in: Šolle 1966.

142 Entwistle, Adams eds. 2010.

identical jewellery of the "Great Moravian" type comes from Mosaburg-Zalavár in Hungary linked to Pribina and Kocel, where the operation of their own workshop can be assumed.[143]

The current map of finds registers around sixty sites in Bohemia. A massive occurrence of luxurious silver, golden and gilded artefacts is observed in cemeteries connected with Central Bohemian Přemyslid strongholds and centres in the eastern part of Central Bohemia.[144] Apart from the quite unique grave at Želénky in north-west Bohemia, probably related to the nearby Zabrušany stronghold, in the rest of Bohemia we find pieces usually of lower quality, which might partly mirror the current state of research. Nevertheless, the map showing the occurrence of exclusive jewellery roughly reflects the foci of power in Bohemia in the last third of the 9th–first half of the 10th century.

The traditional interpretation used for the richest graves of females is the grave of a "duchess". In this context we speak of grave No. 106b in Kouřim, grave No. 268 in Libice or a female burial with exclusive grave goods at Želénky near Duchcov. However, deriving social position solely from rich grave goods could be misleading. A duchess then might equally be seen in grave Nos. 16 or 82 in the Lumbe Garden about 200 m from Prague Castle, but in this case these vain women belonged "only" to the circle of the elite of the ducal retinue. Real duchesses would have certainly been laid to rest within the Castle precinct while one of them, interred at roughly the same time, was buried in a tomb inside the Church of the Virgin Mary, which is accompanied by a modest set of three pieces of silver jewellery.[145]

All the variants of the ways in which Moravian-style jewellery entered the Bohemian environment were outlined some time ago by Zdeněk Smetánka.[146] We can take into consideration both the import of finished products from Moravian workshops (whether as a gift or a commercial article, or as property of the resettled "Moravian women"), and their manufacture by jewellery makers versed in the Great Moravian technologies and operating in Bohemia. Advances in our knowledge, brought about by comparative metallographic analyses, established lower fineness in the set of golden jewellery from Bohemia compared to their Moravian analogues.[147] The existence of a workshop, operating probably in Central Bohemia (most likely in Prague), is reliably indicated by analysis of the technology and style. In a number of jewelleries it

143 Szőke 2010, 37–41, Figs. 15–17.
144 Boháčová, Profantová 2014, tab. 1, Fig. 4.
145 Borkovský 1953.
146 Smetánka 2003, 38–53.
147 Profantová, Frána 2003.

identified features unfamiliar to Moravia. The workshop (workshops?) initially based its (their) production on Great Moravian techniques, but it is expected it soon began to apply new decorative motifs (e.g. animal applications) and develop forms which have analogues in the hacksilver hoards to the north of Bohemia.[148] The items produced by these workshops include small metal containers (kaptorgas), which do not have direct models in the Moravian environment.[149] Apart from the assumed Přemyslid Central Bohemian domain, this type of jewellery is also known from "duchess" graves in Kouřim and Libice. However, roughly from the second third of the 10th century the number of finds of exclusive jewellery rapidly decreased and soon completely disappeared from grave goods. They were replaced by uniform S-shaped temple rings, the models for which can probably be sought for west of Bohemia.[150] The difficult question that remains is, after this conspicuous divide, to what extent do the grave goods reflect the fashion of the living.[151]

The wearing of imported Great Moravian jewellery in Bohemia could have been a relatively short-lived episode. Precise dating of when the individual pieces were made is problematic as is establishing when the Bohemian workshop(s) began to operate. The arrival of Moravian jewellery makers did not necessarily occur only after the downfall of Great Moravia; the shiny adornments may have lost their Moravian connotations in the Bohemian environment.

In the past, Fratišek Graus warned of superficial political interpretation of objects from Bohemia with Great Moravian characteristics.[152] The farsightedness of this remark is today underpinned by the quickly increasing number of finds of splendid objects of "Avar" nature, arriving in Bohemia from the south-east, which the Bohemian elite boasted of in the 8th and at the beginning (?) of the 9th century before they were replaced by "Great Moravian" ones.

Equally problematic at the moment is the evaluation of residential architecture, which articulated the symbolic space of representation and at the same time usually modified existing models.[153] From several centres at the margins of the Carolingian world we are aware of clear imitations of the building culture of the Carolingian and Ottonian *palatia* (Starigard-Oldenburg, Pohansko

148 Boháčová, Profantová 2014, Frolík 2015, 97–107.

149 Štefan 2005.

150 Štefan 2010; Tomková 2008.

151 A narrow selection offers only infrequent treasures with a non-coinage element, in which local provenance or more precise dating of the embellishments (which are usually broken up – hence discarded from living culture) cannot be guaranteed.

152 Graus 1963, 304.

153 Moreland, Van de Noort 1992.

near Břeclav).[154] From Bohemia, with a few exceptions, we have not come across buildings with an evident residential function. A rare example is the so-called ducal court at Budeč enclosed by a palisade covering an area of 4,500 m^2. The space around the rotunda of St. Peter built in the corner was used as a burial ground soon after construction. Archaeological excavation of the necropolis yielded several examples of jewellery of the Great Moravian type. The court probably originates from the end of the 9th or the beginning of the 10th century; its inner space having been regrettably destroyed by the modern-day cemetery.[155] In its size and the position of the church in the corner, the structure in Budeč resembles the court at Pohansko. Again, it is difficult to judge whether it directly refers to Moravian models or whether both environments simultaneously imitated contemporary Frankish models. The coincidence of the shape, size and the occurrence of jewellery of a Great Moravian nature at the adjoining cemetery rather support Moravian inspiration. The court vanished sometime in the 2nd third of the 10th century. Similar structures can justifiably be expected in other important Přemyslid castles but are unknown to archaeologists. Large buildings, models of which need to be sought outside Bohemian territory, such as Stará Kouřim and Levý Hradec,[156] s have no currently known direct analogues in Moravia.

7.3 Moneyless Economy

Almost half a century after the fall of Great Moravia the Prague dukes decided to mint their own coin derived from the first phase from Bavarian models.[157] But until the 11th century the coins did not fulfil the role of a general means of exchange at the local market, but were predetermined for foreign transactions. Exchange in Great Moravia and in the Bohemia of the first Přemyslids was managed without struck metal, a fact which might well apply to most of the East-Frankish Empire until the Ottonian period. In the 960s, the traveller Ibrahim ibn Yaqub from Córdoba encountered *kinshars* at the Prague market, probably of local or German coinage. They were to have been exchanged at a rate of 1:10 to the local currency in the form of kerchiefs.[158] The present-day discussion informed by economic anthropology does not agree on what the role

154 Gabriel 1986; Macháček 2010.

155 Bartošková 2010.

156 The long hall-type structure at Stará Kouřim would need a review of its original processing: Šolle 1966, 109–120; Tomková 2001, 264–265.

157 Petráň 1998.

158 *Relacja Ibrāhīma ibn Ja`kūba*.

of market exchange in the society was and whether the pre-monetary means of payment really represented a general means of exchange. The chances of the discovery (and reliable interpretation) of a textile means of payment is minimal. In Moravia and Slovakia attention is raised in this context mainly by iron axe-shaped ingots, often found in whole series. Whether they were used for payment, tesauration of value or as a semi-finished product, they are so far unknown in Bohemia and iron objects were generally stored in hoards to a much lesser extent there.[159]

In Great Moravia, as in the Bohemia of the first Přemyslids, a cardinal social role was played by the so-called gift-giving economy. An example from the Bohemian environment is provided by the Christian's Legend, according to which Duchess Ludmila gave presents of "gold, silver and splendid attire" to her future assassins Tunna and Gommon.[160] The gifts of prestigious objects established and maintained the patron-client bonds – the basis of the early medieval retinue. Gifts also accompanied most political negotiations both local and in the West.[161] We assume that the archaeological reflection of these mechanisms are the finds of exclusive militaria and jewellery at cemeteries attached to the centres which, for example, in the Lumbe Garden at Prague Castle or in Zákolany below Budeč, probably served for the members of the Přemyslid retinue. Control over long-distance routes and specialists mastering sophisticated production technologies had strategic importance for the rulers and the elites. Apart from jewellery, there must have been numerous weapons and other pieces of equipment circulating in society, although they were no longer buried with the dead. Dušan Třeštík supposed the equipment of the army of the first Přemyslids must have been bought (he implied probably abroad), which according to him was to have been paid for from the slave trade.[162] The necessary quantity of swords and other weapons must have been massive. From the end of the 9th century in Malá Strana, on the slopes of Petřín Hill and subsequently within the area of Staré Město and below Vyšehrad, archaeological excavations register an enormous concentration of workshops dedicated to processing iron, whose operation was probably under the control of the ruler.[163] It is unlikely that Prague produced enough iron for the whole of Bohemia or that it was exported abroad. Although we are still unaware of the range of blacksmith products from the Prague workshops, they

159 Bartošková 1986; Curta 2011.
160 *Legenda Christiani*, 36–37.
161 Curta 2006; Le Jan 2006.
162 Třeštík 2001a.
163 Havrda, Podliska, Zavřel 2001; Ježek 2011.

were presumably intended to produce weapons for the Přemyslid army. The processing of iron and non-ferrous metals is also evidenced in all Great Moravian agglomerations.

Noble inhabitants of the centres and later the clergy were absolved from the production of food and craft products and their sustenance and means of support rested on the shoulders of others. The conventional name for the system described in Bohemian documents from the 11th and 12th century is service organisation. The ruler gives as a present unfree individuals often specialised in a particular craft or service. The bestowed people then settled near the centres and in the village environment.[164] A similar strategy of providing for the ruler's apparatus is found in Hungarian documents from the beginning of the 11th century and in documents from the 12th and 13th centuries in Poland.[165] However, the concept of a developed system of settlements specialised exclusively in a single activity is from a great part based on toponyms of the individual trades and no such "production co-operative" has so far been archaeologically identified. Toponyms of the trades occur in all three Central European monarchies while they are almost completely missing in the territory of the Slavs from the Elbe basin and within the Frankish Empire.[166] Although the origin of so-called professional local names is usually impossible to date,[167] the relationship of at least some of them with the service organisation is very likely. As suggested above, Dušan Třeštík sought for the origins of the system in Great Moravia. Unfortunately, in the infrequent written sources we do not find any mention concerning the strategy of supplying the Moravian centres. We don't know whether the centres had a self-sufficient economy taking advantage of an unfree workforce settled directly within them or in their hinterland, or whether they also used the unfree from more remote settlements, which is one of the determining features of a "service organisation" in the 11th and 12th century. Nevertheless, these specific local names do not occur in the environs of the major strongholds in the Morava basin, and although we know them from the territory of today's Slovakia, it is impossible to establish whether their origins go back as early as the 9th century or they were created later at the time of Hungarian rule.[168]

164 A summary in: Petráček 2017.

165 Györffy, 1976b; Modzelewski 2002².

166 A summary in: Lübke 2008, Fig. 3.

167 Klápště 2012, 344–350.

168 Třeštík 1997, 292; Kučera 1974, 258–360, 377–381. In the first half of the 11th century the service organisation existed even in eastern Hungary, which had not been part of Great Moravia: Györffy 1976b, 40.

The economy of most of the traditional societies worked on the subsistence principle, i.e. it produced only a little more than was needed to keep the system going. Although an internal market did operate in these communities it suffered from frequent failures and as such could not be relied on. Some form of sustaining of the elites in the form of regularly collected taxes paid in kind and services therefore should be expected both in Great Moravia and in Bohemia in the 9th century without necessarily looking for any genetic relationship between them. The other question is whether the custom of deriving the names of settlements from particular services spread from a single area, or whether it emerged in the Central European monarchies independently.

7.4 Church Architecture

The question of how important was Moravian Christianity for the organization of the Church in Přemyslid Bohemia cannot be answered on the basis of the archaeological evidence. The exaggerated expectations of direct continuation of the heritage of Methodius and a massive outburst of Old Church Slavic liturgy and literature in Bohemia was rejected by František Graus and later again by Dušan Třeštík.[169] More conciliatory views convincingly place the origin of several Old Church Slavic manuscripts in Bohemia thus confirming a certain continuation.[170]

The starting point is Bořivoj's baptism at Svatopluk's court before 885 and the subsequent difficult evangelisation in Bohemia, the palpable outcome of which should have been the Church of St. Clement at Levý Hradec and the Church of the Virgin Mary at Prague Castle. But it was Christian's Legend that at the end of the 10th century referred to the Great Moravian origins of Christianity, while earlier legends – probably following a purpose – attribute the adoption of Christianity to Bořivoj's successors.[171] Apart from the priest Kaich, who accompanied Bořivoj to Bohemia, a larger number of Moravian priests arrived in Bohemia probably even at the time of the crisis and especially after the downfall of Great Moravia. To a limited extent they continued to develop Old Church Slavic literature and some customs of the Moravian church, probably including liturgy conducted in Old Church Slavic. Without their contribution it might have not been possible to build the foundations

169 Graus 1963; Třeštík 2006a.
170 Kalhous 2010; Sommer 2014.
171 Třeštík 1997, 312–337.

of the Bohemian ecclesiastical organisation.[172] It seems that in Moravia the origins of the arriving priests were much more varied than later in Bohemia, as is at least suggested by information on the activity of "many priests from Italy, Greece and Germany" in *The Life of Methodius*.[173] From the perspective of ecclesiastical administration from 895 Bohemia came under the Regensburg bishopric and from that date onwards never broke its affiliation to the Imperial church. The developed Cyril and Methodius tradition can be securely considered an invention of the High Middle Ages.

The attention of archaeology is primarily focused on the oldest ecclesiastical architecture (Fig. 7.1), our knowledge of which in Bohemia is much more modest than in Moravia for a number of reasons. The extreme variety in terms of type and size of more than twenty recognised foundations of ecclesiastical structures from the territory of Moravia and Slovakia clearly confirms that during the 9th–beginning of the 10th century there was no specific building type established there. Models for the individual churches are usually sought in Bavaria, the Dalmatian milieu, northern Italy, or possibly further afield in the Balkans, which correlates with the expected highly varied origins of the clergy. A striking feature which does not have an analogy in the West is the church entrance areas – narthexes.[174] The typological variety can additionally reflect the specific functions of the individual churches.

As of today, we have available data of mixed quality from only five sacred buildings in Bohemia originating from the period from the end of the 9th to the mid-10th century. The rotunda uncovered by Ivan Borkovský inside the Church of St. Clement at Levý Hradec has been dated based on the foundation stone still present there to the end of the 11th century at the earliest and cannot be identified with Bořivoj's original foundation.[175]

The oldest church known to us is therefore the Church of the Virgin Mary at Prague Castle, reportedly built by Bořivoj after his second return to Bohemia in the area between the second and the fourth courtyard.[176] It is a smallish longitudinal structure with an apse, the inner space of which was from a greater part filled by a vault, into which a smaller tomb was inserted in a later phase, where Spytihněv I († 915) with his wife were very likely interred. In the 2nd half of the 11th century the church was renovated to a similar floor plan, which considerably complicates clear identification of walls from the earlier phase and

172 Třeštík 2006a.
173 MMFH II, 144.
174 Štefanovičová 2001.
175 Sommer 2001, 144–160.
176 Borkovský 1953, 152–153.

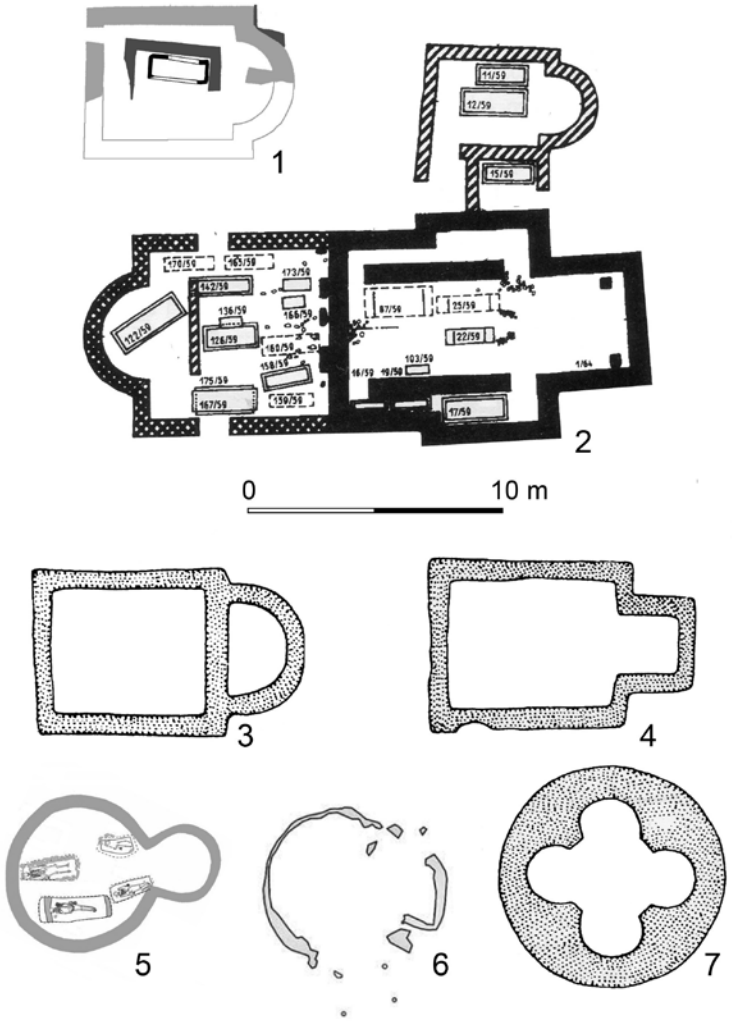

FIGURE 7.1 1 – Church of the Virgin in Prague Castle: dark grey – remains of the first phase of the church and tombs with stone walls, light grey – second phase of the church and reconstruction of its southern part, black – presumed tomb of Spytihněv I and his wife (according to I. Borkovský, J. Maříková-Kubková and I. Herychová). Small sacred buildings from the 9th and the beginning of the 10th century in Moravia: 2 – Sady near Uherské Hradiště (according to L. Galuška); 3 – Mikulčice, 4th church (according to L. Poláček); 4 – Mikulčice, 8th church (according to L. Poláček); 5 – Pohansko near Břeclav, rotunda in SE suburb (according to J. Macháček and collective); 6 – Mikulčice, 7th church (according to L. Poláček); 7 – Mikulčice, 10th church (according to L. Poláček).

their reconstruction.[177] In the latest study, which probably justifiably returns to Borkovský's reconstruction of an above-ground vault, its authors presented the hypothesis that Bořivoj's church should be sought elsewhere and consider the discussed structure to be a mausoleum, established a short distance from the expected structure in the earlier cemetery. Filling up most of the space of the relatively small nave with a vault must have certainly impeded the liturgical function in the first phase. The closest analogy in the Moravian environment is provided by the burial chapel at Sady near Uherské Hradiště, adjoining the northern side of the church of significantly greater dimensions with grave No. 12/59, which was hiding a painted stone tomb.[178] A similar solution is out of the question at Prague Castle.[179] As the proposed location of the "real" Church of the Virgin Mary is not justified by the authors in any way the whole construct remains a hypothesis. The bold linking of the first phase of the excavated structure with the baptism in 845 is based on the purely subjective presumption that the origin of the vault and the subsequent insertion of a smaller tomb must have been separated by more than 20–25 years.[180]

The uncovered structure at Prague Castle is a universal type dispersed throughout the whole of Christian Europe. It was also adopted by the simple Church of the Virgin Mary on the acropolis at Budeč, established probably around the mid 10th century.[181] The most attractive longitudinal building in Bohemia from that period is the Basilica of St. George founded by Vratislaus, undoubtedly following western models.[182]

Rotundas are represented by St. Peter's Church at Budeč, built by Spytihněv I, and St. Vitus at Prague Castle by Wenceslas. At Budeč the vaulted nave was adjoined by an apse with an almost circular plan, from which two short partition walls ran into the space of the nave.[183] The described method of joining the apse or the partitions in front of the altar is not encountered in the Great Moravian churches. The latest analysis of St. Vitus' Rotunda attributes – unlike

177 Remarkably, the authors of the research revision arrived at a profoundly different view within a period of just a few years: cf. Frolík et al. 2000, 17–96; Maříková-Kubková, Herychová 2015. In my opinion, the new interpretation lacks clear justification.

178 Church of the Virgin Mary – inner length of the church 665 cm, northern chapel in Uherské Hradiště-Sady 610 cm: Galuška 1996.

179 The church was surrounded by a cemetery on all sides and the access road ran along the south side probably from as early as the 9th century: Frolík 2013.

180 Maříková-Kubková, Herychová 2015, 72.

181 Šolle 1991.

182 Frolík et al. 2000, 97–144.

183 Šolle 1991; Macek 1992.

earlier works – only a simple nave without the inner gallery and the eastern apse to the first phase.[184]

The discussion of the provenance of Bohemian rotundas, which has lasted over one hundred years, has yet to reach any convincing conclusions. Opinions vary even within works by the same authors. On the one hand, the models are sought in the Great Moravian environment (initially supported by the dating of St. Clement's Rotunda at Levý Hradec to Bořivoj's time),[185] and on the other hand there are references to the Carolingian chapel in Aachen and the Carolingian and Ottonian octagonal palace chapels derived from there. At any rate both Bohemian rotundas originate from the time when Bohemia already belonged to the Regensburg diocese from where they were also consecrated. Whoever oversaw their design and construction, their architectural vocabulary might have attained new symbolic connotations in the contemporary ecclesiastical/political constellation. Although west of Bohemia the rotundas do not belong to the frequently occurring types, they are distributed over a vast territory from Byzantium, via Italy to Catalonia.[186]

It is also imperative to take into consideration the practical aspect of things. The low frequency of construction activities in the period under discussion probably prevented maintaining a building workshop in permanent operation and the specialists working there were invited as needed from various regions bringing with them specific patterns and technologies. It is therefore questionable to what extent any "Great Moravian" building tradition could have been reproduced over an extended period. The contribution by archaeology and the history of architecture to the issue of the Moravian influence on Christianity in Bohemia therefore remains relatively modest and is hard to address by methodology.

7.5 Conclusion

Establishing the contribution of foreign influences on the process of the rise of complex societies is one of the most difficult tasks. All Central-European monarchies can be considered typical "secondary states",[187] established as an outcome of interaction with the Frankish Empire and its successors, but they also certainly influenced one another. The stabilisation of more complex

184 Frolík 2000, 145–208.
185 More on early Czech architecture in: Merhautová, Třeštík 1986; Merhautová 2006.
186 Nawrot 2013.
187 More on the concept of primary and secondary states in: Price 1978.

structures in Moravia probably falls to the 2nd half of the 9th century. The period in which Great Moravia could exert its influence on the Bohemian environment therefore lasted only a few decades, where the immediate impact is limited solely to the reign of Bořivoj and Svatopluk. After the decline of the Moravian polity, Bohemia submits to Bavaria and from an ecclesiastical/administrative point of view becomes part of the Regensburg diocese. In the first half of the 10th century the geopolitical map of Central Europe was turned upside down. In the period of the Magyar invasions the "Carolingian" Central Danube basin vanished and as a consequence of the installation of Henry I the centre point of Central Europe shifted from Bavaria to Saxony. Boleslaus I on his accession to power found himself in a different geopolitical constellation than his predecessors from several decades before. The oldest Bohemian legends – probably intentionally – avoid the Great Moravian episode which was incorporated into the picture of the history of the Bohemians only later by Christian. Even the first great designer of the image of the Bohemian history – Cosmas – does not say much. There is no place for Great Moravia in his legend of the Přemyslid dynasty and he obviously does not attach great significance to Bořivoj's baptism either.

In relation with the crisis and disintegration of Great Moravia we assume the arrival of members of some specialised sections of Moravian society. The Moravian origin of priests with Slavic names who appear in the oldest Bohemian legends and who in a restricted way could have continued to develop the Old Church Slavic liturgy and literature is quite probable. The contribution from archaeology to the assessment of the "Great Moravian" impact on the Bohemian church is limited. The area in which the adoption of foreign elements is easiest to discern is the material means of representation. There can now be no doubts that dress accessories were produced in Central Bohemia on the basis of modified Great Moravian techniques and patterns. However, its production disappears from archaeological evidence as early as around the mid-10th century and women's fashion is ruled over by simple S-temple rings probably referring to western models. Great importance is ascribed to the absence of proprietary churches in Bohemia until the 11th century, which indicates the different positions of Bohemian and Moravian magnates.

There was lively interaction between the elites from the individual regions, which could have been accompanied by an exchange of information on how to exercise control over their people, how to secure the collection of taxes in kind required to provide for maintaining the administrative apparatus or which offices should be bestowed upon or tasks set to faithful leaders. The arrival of a greater number of elite warriors who assisted in organising "the building of the Přemyslid state" cannot, at present, be confirmed nor rejected. It does not

seem realistic though that early medieval rulers were able to implement *ad hoc* the whole political-administrative system of another polity. Rather they selectively picked *ad hoc* individual organisational elements, the introduction of which into the local environment was momentarily feasible, although a number of attempts must have ended in dead-ends.[188] It is therefore assumed that the observed correspondences between Central European polities are, rather than a result of exactly "copying" a single archetype, the product of similar strategies of integration of the society, which responded to similar initial socio-economic moments. A key role was likely played by the specific collective approach to the possession of land, which for an extensive period had prevented the adoption of the western model based on vast private domains and consequently required the developing of other strategies of providing for the elites and administration of the land.

188 Stein 2002.

CONCLUSION

Who Was the Man Buried in Grave H153 in Pohansko and What Happened to Him and His Family at the End of Great Moravia?

Jiří Macháček
Translated by *Miloš Bartoň*

In this last chapter we should finally answer the question, "who was the extraordinary man who found his last rest in the most prestigious location on the main axis inside the second church in Pohansko near Břeclav?"[1] We will try to understand his position in the social hierarchy to explain, what happened with him and his clan during the collapse of Great Moravia at the beginning of 10th century.

The man must have belonged to an important family and rubbed shoulders with the top echelons of Great Moravian society, although we do not expect the he was directly a member of the ruling dynasty. However, the dating of the church does not exclude the possibility that some exiled member of the Mojmirid dynasty claimed the family heritage after the fall of Moravian polity and try their fortune on the home turf in Pohansko.

Whatever the case, the man from the rotunda belonged to the contemporary elites and was a Christian. This is unsurprising because tombs of the members of the Slavic upper class were situated in the interior of the church not only in Great Moravia but also in other Slavic populated regions, where the ruling elites were in the Early Middle Ages Christianized – e.g. in the Eastern Alp.

The older man from Pohansko was by far the most robust both in the cemeteries around the second church and in the male population from Great Moravia. He also had highly privileged access to quality food rich in animal protein. The man often consumed fish as a typical meal in the lent period. By the changes on his skeleton it can be assumed that during his life he did not need to do hard physical labour. With the necessary level of uncertainty, we identify him as the founder or owner of the church.

1 This chapter has been drawn up as part of research work under the GA18–08646S project of the Czech Science Foundation.

 | DOI:10.1163/9789004392878_009

1 Who Were the Owners of Great Moravian Churches?

If we continue to consider the rotunda in the suburb at Pohansko a proprietary church and the man buried inside the church nave its founder and owner, we are faced with a broad range of possible historical-archaeological explanations of the social situation which enabled the rise of our hero at the end of Great Moravia's existence. In early medieval Bavaria, if we disregard the ruler, the builders of churches were recruited both from free and hereditary owners of allodial titles to land, and from important beneficiaries[2] – officials, members of the retinue and other highly positioned persons who were in the service of dukes or kings and held various offices or beneficia (privileges or benefits).[3]

If he had been a beneficiary of the Great Moravian duke, then in the context of Pohansko he would most likely have held the function of governor/warden of the castle, in 12th century Central Europe commonly called *castellanus*.[4] In the 7th to 9th century these officials emerged in West and North Europe in the environment of large emporia or wiks, merchant and craft centres, where they represented the interests of the kings and their fiscus. This was the case, for example, at Hedeby – an important trading centre on the boundary between the Empire and the Viking world, where they were called "*comes vici*" (*Wikgraf*). We also know them from other places, where they were named "*Wicgerefa*" (London, in 685), "*praefectus vici*" (Birka), "*praefectus emporii Quentowic*" (Quentowic, between 858–868), etc. They primarily engaged themselves in collecting customs duties and maintaining order and peace in the settlement. In wartime they also took care of the security of the emporium.[5]

The governors (*comes*), prefects or castellans lived off the benefits of their office (they could acquire a share in various fines, participate in organising long-distance trade, and later levy customs, a toll, etc.), however, according to Libor Jan they also acquired property of land originally lent to them through their office, which even as late as the 11th and 12th century was in principal not hereditary, but could have a lot in common with a fief.[6] It was a scheme based on which the noble landowners was slowly constituted, including in Czech lands. After all, it is documented in the well-known and often discussed report on the conflict between Mstiš – the governor of Lštění Castle and later Bílina – with Vratislaus II, recorded in his chronicle by Cosmas.[7] Mstiš, called

2 On the notion of beneficiary see Jan 2006, 192ff.; 2009.
3 Wood 2006, 34.
4 Jan 2009, 471; Wihoda 2010, 260–265.
5 Jankuhn 1986, 140, 204–205, 212–215.
6 Jan 2009, 469.
7 Jan 2007; Žemlička 1997, 201, 242; Klápště 2005, 48–52.

by Cosmas "*comes urbis Beline*", was probably a very cruel man as, on the orders of Duke Spytihněv II he kept imprisoned his captive sister-in-law, the wife of the later Duke and King Vratislaus, "every night tying her leg to his leg by a shackle". At the same time, he must have been very capable as he was appointed to the administration of two important Přemyslid castles. This is also admitted by Cosmas when he writes that Mstiš the son of Bor was "a man of great courage and even greater eloquence and no less prudence". He showed his courage by asking Vratislaus, whose wife he had so humiliated, to kindly "come to a celebratory … consecration" of the church that Mstiš ordered to be built with permission by the previous duke "to honour Saint Peter the Apostle" in Bílina. The duke intriguingly enough agreed, but only to get revenge on Mstiš, which the governor, in spite of his prudence, did not envisage "… and expressing great thanks to the duke, he merrily departed to make the necessary preparations for a great feast".

The whole of the ensuing story is told by Cosmas as follows: "The duke and the bishop arrived, and as soon as the church in the suburb was consecrated, the duke walked up to the castle for dinner and the castle governor together with the bishop also sat down to the feast tables in the governor's courtyard in front of the church. During the dinner a messenger arrived and whispered to him: 'Castle administration has been removed from you and given to the son of Všebor, Kojata;' who at that time was the first at the duke's court. To which the castle governor answered: 'He is the duke and the lord, let him do with his castle whatever he pleases. But what my church has today, the duke does not have the power to take away.' But had he not fled the same night following advice from the bishop and with his assistance, he would have certainly lost his eyes and his leg which he once tied to the leg of the duke's wife." So wrote Cosmas on the events which took place in 1061.[8]

Although there is a gap of more than 150 years between Mstiš and our man from the rotunda, one cannot avoid the impression that both shared similar traits. Thanks to his physical constitution the deceased man from grave No. 153 must have commanded respect during his life and certainly excelled with heroic deeds on the battlefield. Given his advanced age, which only a small section of the contemporary population lived to (according to the anthropologist Vladimír Sládek he was among the three oldest people in the whole cemetery at the rotunda), he must have also been experienced and had foresight. But, most importantly, like Mstiš, he had a proprietary church in the suburb of the castle that, as I expect, was under his governance.

8 *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica Bohemorum, ed. B. Bretholz, MGH SS II, Berolini 1923.* Czech translation quoted from: Hrdina, Bláhová, Fiala 1972, 102.

At the end of the 9th century he began to build his family dominium with a church in the symbolic centre. He erected it at Pohansko outside the fortified area and the sphere of ducal power. When the Great Moravian ruler arrived at Pohansko, he probably feasted, just as Vratislaus of the Přemyslids did at Bílina, in his own palace (*in palatio ducis*) that we identify with the excavated Magnate Court with a splendid church inside the fortification, while the governor must have been satisfied with a more modest church in the suburb (*ecclesia, que est sita in suburbio*), like Mstiš. The question is whether too fell into disfavour, as suggested by some interventions in his skeleton detected by anthropologists during their analyses. His skull lay in the grave in a strange position, standing on its base, and three neck vertebrae were missing, which indicates that it could have been secondarily manipulated past mortem or the head was decapitated in life. However, our hero did not flee from Pohansko as he was buried with the last rites in "his" church among the closest relatives. The surroundings of the rotunda were then the place of last rest for the other members of the family, servants and other people from the wide circle of those dependant on him, whom we might term an early medieval *familia*.[9] Armed members of his retinue with their families may also have belonged there.[10] Separate cemeteries where members of the noble family are buried together with persons in a dependent position (servants), have been known from as early as the Merovingian period in Belgium (e.g. Beerlegem) and Germany (Niederstotzigen, Kircheim/Ries and Großhöbing). German archaeologists consider these cemeteries a significant phenomenon which very likely testifies to the early aristocracy ruling over people.[11]

During the early Christianisation process, the construction of a church had great symbolic significance linked with great social capital. Primarily it was a manifestation of the builder's prestige,[12] who tried to emulate the ruler with his funding. While the second church at Pohansko did not reach the standard of the temple from the Magnate Court that we consider to be a ducal "*palatium*",[13] it was nevertheless a prestigious edifice, in particular when the church was one of the few buildings in this part of early medieval Europe built in stone (or so it seemed to the observer from the outside).

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9 Hassenpflug 1999, 227; Scholkmann 1997, 463; Smith 2005, 86–87.

10 The existence of military retinues in the Eastern March within the territory of today's Austrian Danube region is dealt with in this book in the chapter by Roman Zehetmayer: The Austrian Danube Region in the decades around 900. Further see Zehetmayer 2008, 39–45.

11 Böhme 2008, 28; Burzler 2000, 138–140.

12 Klápště 2005, 48–50.

13 Macháček 2008b.

The process during which members of the early medieval elite separated themselves from the majority of society and buried their dead in private cemeteries, or directly in churches, started sometime during the 6th century west of the Rhine. One of the first, the Merovingian King Clovis I was buried in the Paris Church of Sainte-Geneviève in 511. This custom was gradually accepted throughout the Frankish Empire, spreading from west to east. By the mid-7th century the line demarcating burials *infra ecclesiam* moved forward as far as the river Lech. In the second half of the 7th century the new custom became distributed throughout Bavaria and Switzerland, where it peaked sometime at the turn of the 7th and the 8th century.[14] Christianization and the accompanying deep transformation of society explain the spread of burials in churches farther to the east, including Moravia in the 9th century. As with the Frankish elites from the Merovingian period, in Moravia the early aristocracy found inspiration in their rulers. In both cases people who were allowed special treatment as part of the funerary cult undoubtedly enjoyed earlier exceptional privileges and thus attained extraordinary social status. An analysis of the epitaphs on tombstones that we know from the western environment enables us to specify what constituted this special status. People who were allowed to be buried in churches *ad sanctos* (near holy relics), but did not directly belong to the members of the ruling dynasty or clerics were typified by: 1) noble birth; 2) recognition by society and wide acceptance among the population; 3) wealth; 4) Christian morals; 5) occasionally holding high office.[15] It is likely that this group of people included our man from the rotunda.

The proposed hypothesis needs to be carefully tested in the future. Not all the premises which support the hypothesis on the origin of the man from the rotunda can be unequivocally evidenced at present. For example, the thesis that he held the office of the governor of the castle at Pohansko is valid only with the proviso that the periods of the existence of the rotunda from the North-East Suburb and the "*palatium*" inside the ramparts at least partly intersected.

A further step in learning about the world of our man from the rotunda was the excavation carried out outside the cemetery. Our goal was nothing other than finding the residence in which the owner of the church lived with his family. A place similar to those described by Cosmas in his account of how the castle governor Mstiš of Bílina feasted with the bishop "in his courtyard

14 Böhme 1996; Burzler 2000, 90–91.

15 Böhme 2008, 26–30.

in front of the church".[16] The Latin original reads: "*in sua curte, que fuit ante ecclesiam*". The term "*curtis*" and its analysis from the archaeological point of view was the subject of a study carried out years ago by Antonín Hejna and Bořivoj Dostál.[17] They claimed in unison that this residential settlement form was imported here from the West, where the Frankish manor with the court continued the ancient building tradition. According to them, they were independent settlement units – economic complexes, part of which was also the abode of the owner. A *curtis* was not fortified, only enclosed by a palisade or a wattle fence. There were several buildings inside the enclosure – apart from the mansion (*casa domincata*) many outbuildings, such as various granaries, cellars, kitchens, warehouses, bakeries (*pistrinum*), etc. This is obviously on a much more modest scale than that of the more splendid and complex *pfalzes* of the Carolingian and Ottonian age.

The new archaeological fieldwork directly followed the excavation of the church cemetery in 2013, and although it has not yet concluded, the first campaigns yielded finds indicating that the sought-after residence of the man from the rotunda has been discovered. Overall, we excavated an area of 1,484 m^2 over three years. The residential part was separated from the church cemetery in the south by an empty corridor ca 4 m wide. We assume that it was here that the road leading towards the hypothetical entrance to the inner fortified section of the agglomeration was situated.

Beyond the road there was an accumulation of very dense settlement. Apart from various trough-shaped features and settlement pits filled with settlement waste there were also half-sunken huts with ovens in the corner, some of which were levelled off and an above-ground house was erected over at least one of them. These types of structures were identified in at least five cases. They are indicated by the finds of hearths, built at the level of the early medieval surface, and in one case with detected fragments of a clay floor. The half-sunken huts which in this location are related to an earlier phase of Great Moravian settlement are considered the traditional abode of the common Slavic population. On the contrary, above-ground and often multi-space houses most often with a timber structure are usually thought to relate to the environment of the central places. Initially they were not an element inherent to the Slavic world[18] and they appeared more frequently from as late as the 8th century.[19]

16 *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica Bohemorum, ed. B. Bretholz, MGH SS II, Berolini 1923. Hrdina, Bláhová, Fiala 1972, 102.*

17 Dostál 1975, 253–259; Hejna 1965, 525–532.

18 Dostál 1987, 19–20.

19 Šalkovský 2009, 40.

The uncovering of a narrow palisade trench which formed the corner of an extensive but light enclosure (fence), the dimensions of which are still unclear, is of great significance. One side of the rectangular enclosure began to disappear after 25 m, the second one ran beyond the investigated area after 10 m. There were two palisade systems (two corners) observable in the terrain. An above-ground building, a half-sunken hut and several settlement pits were found inside the fence. All the Great Moravian settlement features within the examined area, either inside or outside the enclosure, were invariably oriented in the SW-NE direction, in the same way as the church and most of the graves around it, thus forming a uniform structure.

In 2014 we also investigated the so-called large sunken-floored features with workshop characteristics (9.6 m long), situated in the direction of one of the wings of the fence, on its outside. This type of structure is generally connected to craft production, textiles in particular.[20] Another similar feature was uncovered a year later. Its fill contained five loom weights. A small oven with a stone construction from the environs of which the finds of crucibles and accretions of lead originate was also connected with craft production. A large dome-shaped oven, dug into the ground, was of a different nature. Rebuilt at least two times it was probably used for baking bread. Given its extraordinary size (total length including the manipulation space over 5 m and hearth dimensions of 1.4 × 1.5 m), it served to supply a larger group of people. It is assumed to be the bakery (*pistrinum*) that we know from descriptions of royal courts in the Frankish Empire.[21]

Two settlement features command special attention. The first is a half-sunken hut uncovered in the corner of the palisade enclosure which contained an exclusive set of iron objects of various classifications by their function. The identified items consisted of agricultural tools (two sickles, ploughshares and a coulter), carpenter's tools (drill, narrow axe, chisel and saw), jeweller's tools (little hammer and wire draw plate) and equestrian equipment (spurs). In addition, the tools deposit included three buckets and axe-shaped iron ingots. One sickle was found at the south-west side of the half-sunken hut, the mouldboard and coulter were located near the south-east wall in a nearly functional position (originally the complete plough may have stood there). The remaining iron objects were heaped up at the south-east wall, which looked as if a tool shelf or a tool chest was initially located there. This assumption is supported by the find of four flat stones on the floor forming a rectangular oblong shape. They could have been used as supports for the legs of a wooden shelf or maybe

20 Dostál 1993, 1986; Březinová, Přichystalová 2014.

21 Metz 1966, 610.

a chest in which the objects were stored. A stone oven (built in two phases) in the eastern corner of the half-sunken hut yielded a buckle and a belt fitting.[22]

The explanation of such a find is quite difficult. First, we have no idea why such a highly valuable set of iron tools remained in the half-sunken second, we are uncertain why it was situated in the house at all. The tools and the other artefacts were not hidden there against misfortunes, as is expected with standard hoards and treasures, but instead seemingly abandoned. Originally, they belonged to the equipment of the house. However, it is highly improbable that in the Early Middle ages a man or a single family would need this quantity and variety of tools to make a living. We believe they belonged to the inventory of a *curtis* we searched for in the suburb of Pohansko. A similar spectrum of finds and their numbers are mentioned in the *Brevium Exempla* as the equipment (*utensilia*) of a royal[23] or episcopal[24] *curtis* in the Frankish Empire in the 9th century. The listed items covered various types of axes, drills, different woodcarving tools (*scrotisan*, *bursa*), small and large plane (*noil* and *scabo*), scythe, sickle, shovel, and a plethora of various wooden *utensilia*.[25] In addition it also mentions *ferramenta*, or military equipment, a category which might certainly incorporate spurs and military belts with fittings and buckles.

The second remarkable building is one the most important recent finds at Pohansko. It is a surface structure with a stone and mortar corner. Its location had long been signalled pieces of mortar brought to the surface by bioturbance. Excavations revealed a layer of fragments of mortar and a smaller quantity of stones. Some of the mortar fragments showed imprints of wooden elements. Originally mortar was likely used on the outside as plaster on the wooden structures. After the removal of debris, we exposed part of a wall in situ. It was a corner with sides of 1.9 × 1.9 m. The wall laid directly on the early medieval surface without foundations dug out in the ground. A hearth was situated in the corner. The opposite shorter wall of the house is defined by a row of stones. This allowed us to determine the probable dimensions of the structure being 5 × 3.5 m. In this case we are clearly dealing with the remains of a secular building of mixed wooden and stone construction, with a low stone base. Its construction is reminiscent of the single-space and multi-space

22 Dresler, Přichystalová, Macháček 2014.

23 Metz 1966, 613.

24 Elmshäuser 1993.

25 Descriptions list the following: 2 *secures*, 1 *dolatoriam*, 2 *terebros*, 1 *asciam*, 1 *scalprum*, 1 *runcinam*, 1 *planam*, 2 *falces*, 2 *falciculas*, 2 *palas ferro paratas* nebo *Culcita cum plumatiis V, caldaria aerea III, ferrea vero VI, gramacula V, luminare ferreum I, tinas ferro ligatas XVII, alces X, alciculas XVII, dolaturas VII, secures VII* – see Elmshäuser 1993, 362; Metz 1966, 613.

houses on stone and mortar bases from the Magnate Court at Pohansko, considered to be a ruler's residence similar to those in Frankish royal pfalzes called *caminata*. Among them, two houses with stone and mortar corners were classified as a special group by Bořivoj Dostál.[26] By their dimensions (4.5 x 4.5 m, or 5 x 5 m), construction and the overall ground plan they are comparable with the newly discovered house in the North-East Suburb.

Across the excavated settlement, in particular on the level of the original early medieval surface, or in the fill of settlement pits, we uncovered finds that we relate to the presence of elites. Most significantly we should mention the crossguard and pommel of a sword, spurs, tips of arrows, bronze rings, a lead ingot, a piece of decorated silver sheet metal, belt ends and loops, grinding wheels, etc. Outstanding finds such as the polyhedric faceted pearl from mountain crystal, which has analogies as far as the far-away Jordan,[27] glass beads, parts of a chain mail, spurs, etc., concentrated primarily in the wider surroundings of the building with the walled corner. The mosaic is completed by a strikingly high share of game in the osteological material, including trophy animals such as bears.[28]

The present state of knowledge allows us to state that an elite group of people, probably headed by the man buried in the rotunda, lived and buried their dead in the North-East Suburb at the end of the 9th and in the first decades of the 10th century. I proposed the hypothesis that the man originally was the governor of a ducal castle, surrounded by members of his *familia*. This man was likely in possession of some landed property and real estates, possibly the *curtis* in the suburb, but certainly the church in which he was buried himself. At the same time, he was in possession of property that enabled him to own the church which must have been very costly even in the Early Middle Ages. Consequently, I assume that, in accordance with the ideas of Jan Klápště,[29] we should consider the man from the rotunda to be a member of the new medieval aristocracy; a man whose social position was supported by land ownership.

The proposed hypothesis is yet to be thoroughly challenged and critically reviewed by the scientific community, which is not possible until the investigation of the hypothetical "*curtis*" has been finished and the complete collection of finds published, including field documentation. However, if our preliminary conclusions prove correct, the man from the rotunda represents one of the oldest landed aristocrats in East Central Europe – not just somebody of noble

26 Dostál 1975, 64, 281–282, 299–300.

27 Eger, Khalil 2013.

28 I would like to thank Gabriela Dreslerová for the oral information.

29 Klápště 2005, 28.

birth from an important family or a warrior from the duke's retinue, who won his position through bravery in the battle field, but the owner of the church, a court and maybe even the numerous set of tools and instruments uncovered in the half-sunken hut in the corner of the palisade. With them the slaves or serfs (*servus*, *manicipium*) worked the land belonging to the manor, or made various objects from wood or metal providing for the needs of their master. The tools might be on loan to the tenants to whom the owner of the manor leased the land. This model existed as early as the 9th century to the west from Czech lands, where it is termed the early medieval great estate (manor), in German *Grundherschaft*.[30] The existence of the early medieval great estate, and related allodial property, or fief, as property granted for use by the ruler, has so far been impossible to prove in Great Moravia[31] and strictly rejected by influential historians.[32] This does not come as a surprise; the first vague traces of individual property ownership appear in written sources on which historians have to rely as late as the end of the 11th century.[33] Recognition of its general existence is also prevented by the situation discovered in the rural areas, where the structure of settlement shows clear differences between Great Moravia and the Frankish Empire. While in the west, where the system of great estate (manorialism) had already existed, the basic economic and legal unit was the hamlet – "*Hufe*" (*huoba*, *mansus*), lived in and owned by a single household,[34] in East Central Europe similar a subdivision was missing due to collective ownership. The primary economic-social units in Moravia in the 9th century were not the individual households, which could be engaged in the manorial system just as in the Frankish Empire, but whole communities – traditionally called "*občina*" and in the later periods "*vicinat*". The foundations of society were constituted by local clans with their leaders who acted in part autonomously. Their loyalty had to be ensured by the ruler via complicated reciprocal relationships with the aid of redistribution mechanisms and the exchange of gifts. Based on extensive data and a comparison of Central European early medieval settlements Peter Milo arrived at the conclusion that economically independent farmsteads, as we know them from the Germanic environment were completely unknown in the eastern part of Central Europe. For example, early medieval Slavic settlements have no fences, which enclosed the Frankish, Alemanni and Bajuvari farmsteads for legal and practical reasons.[35] Peter Milo interprets the revealed situation in the way that

30 Petráček 2003; Kropp, Meier 2010.
31 Macháček 2008a, 271–276.
32 Třeštík 1997, 293.
33 Klápště 2005, 53, 402.
34 Schulze 2004, 56–57.
35 Schulze 2004, 56–57.

Slavic estates were collective in nature, and the settlements being organised more like territorial units (*občina*), where people did not own the land they worked on. This does not mean that individual ownership did not exist, as it is confirmed by the spatial relationships between half-sunken huts and storage pits for grain.[36]

This was a time of tension bweeen the old social order and the new arrangements privileging the aristocracy with its vast landed estates. That tension may have greatly contributed to the collapse of the Great Moravian society. This may well be the reason for which the unknown founder of the rotunda in Pohansko was completely forgotten not too long after being buried in his church.

2 Where Did the Clan of the Man from the Rotunda Disappear?

The man from the rotunda and his family represent the newly emerging world of the European Middle Ages, the first little step towards social transformation the development of which was vividly described by Jan Klápště.[37] Obviously, it was also a step made before its time. As early as 1997 Dušan Třeštík observed that the arrangement of Great Moravian society "actually corresponded to a late tribal structure".[38] Its foundation remained archaic. At the same time, it was a society that was vital, dynamically developing on the eastern edge of the Carolingian world, which sent strong civilisation impulses towards Moravia. These influences impacted mainly the elite which gradually adopted a western way of life.[39] Its members actively promoted the process of Christianisation. They built the first churches and publicly presented their new faith by various symbols, such as belt ends shaped as the Bible.[40] During excavations in the environs of the rotunda at Pohansko we found two lead crosses which came both from a grave and a settlement feature.[41] A cross lost in the settlement proves that symbols of Christianity were commonly worn, and the faith of their owners was actively displayed in the public.

In contrast to the lifestyle and probably even the worldview of the elites, the majority of Moravian society in the 9th century continued to be organised primarily on the kinship and clan basis and was pagan to a considerable extent.

36 Milo 2014, 694.
37 Klápště 2005, 401–406.
38 Třeštík 1997, 293.
39 Henning 2007, 4.
40 Třeštík 2001, 202.
41 Přichystalová 2013; Kouřil 2014.

Standard Slavic settlements in the Central European region formed clusters of houses or semi-circular or circular shapes, and alternatively rows. It is expected that they were built by the territorial units (*občina*), with surviving large-family and patronymic elements, whose principal task was agricultural produce.[42] At the same time, in rural cemeteries we often find frequent evidence of pagan customs which do not occur so often in central places.[43] Any attempts at introducing social change hit the barrier of the old tribal structures, in a similar way as, for example, in Scandinavia.[44] However, in Moravia these inherent contradictions were not surmounted and in the end they contributed to the collapse at the beginning of the 10th century.

The fall of Great Moravia continues to be a subject of heated debate and there are a number of opinions on its causes. Various explanations have been offered, ranging from the Magyar raids to the interruption of long-distance trade contacts, economic problems and climatic changes.[45]

War wounds, identified by anthropologists on the skeletal material from the cemetery at the rotunda, including devastating fractures in several skulls, indicate that it must have been a tumultuous period rife with violence.[46] Rhombic or rhomboid arrowheads, which are usually connected with the Magyar intrusions, are found in the buried bodies of the victims of the war conflicts that we also know from the cemetery at the first church at Pohansko.[47] There are even descriptions of an accumulation of "Magyar" arrowheads at various locations in the Great Moravian central places, including Pohansko, where they were uncovered mostly in the environs of the Magnate Court with a church.[48] We also register a great number of them in the excavated area in the North-East Suburb. These are not exclusively rhombic arrowheads but a mixture of different types. Rhombic arrowheads were evidently used by the Moravians themselves.[49] Consequently, they cannot be clearly classified as Magyar, in the same way as it is not possible to put the burning down of the enclosure at Pohansko, which was razed sometime at the end of the 9th and the beginning of the 10th century, in a clear relationship with the military activities of the Magyars.[50]

42 Dostál 1987, 10; Ruttkay 2002a; b, 77.
43 Dostál 1966, 97; Měřínský 2006, 473–474.
44 Třeštík 1997, 296.
45 Štefan 2014, 2011; Macháček 2012; Wihoda 2014.
46 Sládek – Macháček eds. 2017.
47 Schulze-Dörrlamm 2002, 111; Schulze 1984, 486; Werther 2013, 251.
48 Kouřil 2008, 121–122; Mazuch 2012, 153.
49 Kouřil, Timonová 2013, 146.
50 Dresler 2011, 135–137.

In contrast, there are suggestions that the contacts between the Magyars and the Moravians were not restricted to military conflict, but included more complicated forms. It is obvious that Great Moravian warriors occassionaly used Magyar weapons which appear in their graves and in their settlements – such as the nomadic war axes called fokos, sabres, etc.[51] A fokos was also the weapon of a warrior from one of the male graves with the rich grave goods from the cemetery at the rotunda in the North-East Suburb of Pohansko. The weapon might have been a war trophy but equally well an expression of a symbiosis and military cooperation between the Moravians and the Magyars. According to a complaint by the Bavarian episcopacy from the summer of 900 the Moravians embraced (willingly?) a great number of Magyars among themselves and even adopted some of their customs themselves in order to attack Christians in Pannonia.[52] A discovery made recently about 300 m north of the North-East Suburb by Petr Dresler might be related to this report. Thanks to a systematic network of trial trenches around Pohansko he located a previously unknown and fairly extensive settlement under a layer of flood sediments which, apart from a quantity of pottery with no precise parallels at Pohansko, yielded finds of clearly Magyar origin, such as a strap end and a bronze pendant. This could be evidence of the more permanent presence of people linked with the Magyar environment near Pohansko, which they did not occupy but only remotely controlled.

Whether the man from the rotunda cooperated with the Magyars or was their fierce enemy is impossible to establish given the current data. We only know for sure that in the end his clan disappeared from Pohansko; its members might have been killed in the bloody succession fights for the Svatopluk's seat or exterminated by the Magyars. Maybe they just left in search of greater safety to other lands where they found a new future. In the deliberations of the exodus of the population from the South-Moravian core of Great Moravia the regions mentioned the most are North Moravia with its centre in Olomouc[53] and Bohemia. There we are aware of several sites with close links to Great Moravia which is clearly manifested by their material culture. In addition to the well-known Stará Kouřim, whose intensive contacts with Great Moravia even appeared many years ago in the title of Miloš Šolle's monograph describing the excavations there,[54] or Prague Castle, where Great Moravian jewellery from

51 Přichystalová, Kalábek 2014; Kouřil 2008, 2006.
52 Wihoda 2010, 86.
53 Měřínský 2008, 98; 1986, 65–70.
54 Šolle 1966.

the richest Bohemian early medieval cemetery were published only recently,[55] the relationships with the eastern and in the 9th century more powerful and advanced neighbour showed on a more modest scale on other sites as well. These include, for example, Budeč, where Saint Wenceslas grew up, and where a massive stronghold with a ducal court existed in the 9th and the 10th century. Grave No. 71 yielded a broken cross with human masks, which was secondarily modified and used as a pendant in the necklace of an approximately five-year-old girl. An exact analogy of the cross, in a complete state, is known from Great Moravian Mikulčice.[56] Budeč is mentioned here on purpose as the local context is strikingly reminiscent of the North-East Suburb at Pohansko. It also had a rotunda surrounded by a cemetery with 56 graves, whose inventory in many aspects copies the grave goods from Pohansko. We have identical jewellery of Great Moravian provenance there – bunch-of-grapes or drum-shaped earrings and gombiks, jingle bells, so-called olive-shaped glass beads, plate spurs with a long neck, as well as slightly later jewellery, which includes an earring with an eyehole.

The local cemetery existed a little longer than the one at Pohansko and, as such, contains more examples of S-shaped temple rings, including their later variants made of a thicker silver wire.[57] The Budeč cemetery immediately adjoined the Magnate Court (or was a part of it?) delimited by palisades. We can assume close genetic relationships between both sites. The people buried at Pohansko and Budeč lived in the same period and belonged to a similar social group although the social status of the inhabitants of Budeč might have been slightly higher, being directly a part of the ducal environment. Related to this is the nature of the local rotunda, which is overall more splendid, larger and of better build. As opposed to the small church from Pohansko, it continues to stand there to this day.

As we ponder the destiny of the descendants of the man from the rotunda, we cannot exclude the possibility that, for the whole of the 10th century, they remained settled somewhere within South Moravia. According to Zdeněk Měřínský and Martin Wihoda, in the first half of the 10th century Moravia was controlled by the Magyars indirectly and a part of Moravian nobility paid a tribute to them. They remained there to co-exist in some way with their Magyar neighbours and possibly even cooperate.[58] After the defeat of the Magyars at the Lech river (955) and mainly after the baptism of their Grand Duke Geza and

55 Frolík, Smetánka 2014.
56 Bartošková 2014, 63.
57 Bartošková 2014, 35–39.
58 Měřínský 2008, 101; Wihoda 2005, 11.

his son, later to become King Stephen in 972,[59] these people could have been given a second chance. After these events the overall political circumstances quietened down throughout the Central European region. Sometime in the last quarter of the 10th century the long distance trade route running alongside the ancient Amber Road leading from the Danube to the north and newly connecting the territories of the Bavarian Eastern March (*Ostarrîchi*) and Hungary with Moravia, Poland and the Baltic again gained in importance. Merchants arriving along the Danube from Regensburg in Bavaria brought the first coins proven to be used in trading transactions in Moravia. At merely one and a half kilometres from Pohansko, which at that time had already been abandoned except for a small pocket of settlement in the ruins of the first church,[60] a new trade emporium or customs place with international traffic arose.[61] It is characterised by frequent finds of unintentionally lost coins, trade weights, jewellery, spurs and other items related to trade, crafts and the elites from the 10th to the 12th century. It cannot be ruled out that the organisation of this important market place was shared together with foreign merchants by the descendants of the old Great Moravian aristocracy who wanted to regain their lost position by revitalising the long distance trade. However, in the end their efforts did not lead to the desired effect. The Moravians who at first joined Poland under Boleslaw I the Brave were integrated by the Prague Přemyslids. The Moravian nobility was liquidated by the Přemyslids and replaced by Bohemian leaders.[62] But that is a completely different story.

3 The Elites at a Time of Change: New Questions

The discoveries that we made in the North-East Suburb at Pohansko have been gradually published and thus disseminated to reach experts and the general public. It is inappropriate to state that we have already managed to exploit their full potential in learning about the development of human society in the early Middle Ages. In the last chapter of our book I have proposed only one possible answer to the question of who the man excavated in the rotunda at Pohansko was. I do not claim to have the right to arrive at unambiguous conclusions, nor to have the last word in this matter. Quite the contrary. I took my contribution as an invitation to a broad-based discussion which is

59 Brunner 2003, 82.
60 Dostál 1975, 171–175, 243, 247.
61 Videman, Macháček 2013; Macháček, Videman 2013.
62 Wihoda 2005, 9–10,17.

bound to follow in connection with the discoveries at Pohansko. Its important component parts were the texts by the other experts, historians, archaeologists and anthropologists collected in this book. They were asked to provide answers to the questions provoked by the finds at Pohansko from their own perspective, and if possible formulate their own alternative hypotheses regarding the events, processes and structures which left an imprint on the actual archaeological finds at Pohansko and on other contemporary sites, as well as in the written sources which relate to the early medieval history of the Central European region. The new finds at Pohansko point quite clearly in the direction that our further considerations should take. They have great significance for the study of the important historical process, which German medievalists call "Nobilifizierung" – the nobilising of medieval society.[63] If we want to join this stream in European science we have to take stance to the position of early medieval elites in the broader context of East Central Europe, to the issues of their origin, legitimacy and continuity; to think about what supported their social position, including more extensive landed property, which at that time need not have belonged only to the clan or been publicly owned, but could have been partly private. It is necessary to formulate our opinions on the role of the elites in the transition from the old, pre-state pagan world, where the foundation stones were the family relationships inside contesting clans led by chiefs, and the emerging Christian world of medieval aristocracy of the beginning Middle Ages. Finally we should assess the actions of the elites at a time of social collapse, when the dysfunctional social structures disintegrated and when the old order was replaced by a new world order. Answers to all these questions will enable us to create a vivid picture of the era when a world was forming at the threshold of the Middle Ages that we are part of today; one which has existed to this day regardless of all the historical peripeteia.[64]

63 Burzler 2000, 171–174.

64 Macháček 2013.

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